CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
QUARTERLY

CTQ

Volume 55: Number 1

JANUARY 1991

CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
QUARTERLY

CTQ

ISSN 0038-8610

Issued Quarterly by the Faculty of
Concordia Theological Seminary

The *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, a continuation of the *The Springfielder*, is a theological journal of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, published for its ministerium by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY is indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals* and abstracted in *Old Testament Abstracts* and *New Testament Abstracts.*

The CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY is published in January, April, July, and October. All changes of address (including Missouri Synod clergymen), subscription payments, and other correspondence concerning business matters should be sent to Concordia Theological Quarterly, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825. The annual subscription rate is $5.00.

The Symposia of Concordia Theological Seminary (January 1991)

THE SIXTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY

"The Order of Creation"

Tuesday, January 22, 1991

1:00 p.m. Welcome and Introduction

1:15 p.m. "Natural Order and Law in Graeco-Roman Thought." Dr. Arthur W.H. Adkins, Edward Olson Professor in the Departments of Classics, Early Christian Literature, and Philosophy and Chairman of the Committee on the Ancient Mediterranean World, University of Chicago, Illinois

2:15 p.m. "The Creator and His Image." Dr. Douglas McC. L. Judisch, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

3:00 p.m. Afternoon Tea

3:30 p.m. "The Fertility Cult and the Old Testament." Dr. Walter A. Maier III, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

Wednesday, January 23, 1991

8:30 a.m. "Women in Judaism of the Second Temple." Prof. Dean O. Wenthe, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

9:15 a.m. "The Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 14:34-36." Dr. Walter A. Maier, Academic Dean and Professor of Exegetical Theology (New Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

10:00 a.m. Chapel Service with Sermon on Galatians 3:28. Dr. Harold H. Buls, Professor Emeritus of Exegetical Theology (New Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

11:00 a.m. "The Meaning of *Authentein* in 1 Timothy 2:12." Dr. Waldemar Degner, Chairman of the Department of Exegetical Theology and Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Concordia Theological Seminary

THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

"Ministry—Reality or Myth?"

Wednesday, January 23, 1991

1:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introduction
1:15 p.m.	"Donatism, Augustine, and Augustana VIII." Dr. William C. Weinrich, Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
2:15 p.m.	"Church and Ministry: Issues in Writing Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics." Prof. Kurt E. Marquart, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
3:30 p.m.	Coffee Break
4:00 p.m.	"Ministry: Ecclesiological and Hermeneutical Reflections." Dr. Karl P. Donfried, Professor of Religion and Biblical Literature, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts
6:30 p.m.	Banquet

Thursday, January 24, 1991

8:45 a.m.	"Luther and Contemporary Lutheran Understandings of the Church." Dr. Torleiv Austad, Professor in the Teologiske Menighetsfakultet, Oslo, Norway
10:00 a.m.	Chapel Service
10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break
11:00 a.m.	"Augustana XIV and the Lutheran Dogmaticians." Dr. Robert D. Preus, Past President and Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
12:15 p.m.	Luncheon
1:30 p.m.	"Augustana V: Is It Still Useful for a Lutheran Doctrine of the Ministry?" Dr. David P. Scaer, Chairman of the Department of Systematic Theology, Professor of Systematic and New Testament Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
2:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion: "The Doctrine of the Ministry: Is Unity Possible or Do Lutherans Have to Live with Diversity?"

5:00 p.m. Choral Vespers
6:00 p.m. Dinner
8:00 p.m. Organ Recital. Rev. Paul Grime
8:30 p.m. Reception in the Student Commons

THE SECOND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE LUTHERAN LITURGY AND HYMNODY

Friday, January 25, 1991

8:15 a.m. "The Centrality of the Liturgy." Dr. Arthur A. Just, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry, Concordia Theological Seminary
9:00 a.m. "The Chorale: Transcending Time and Culture." Dr. Robin Leaver, Associate Professor of Church Music, Princeton University, New Jersey
10:00 a.m. Chapel Service: Epiphany Lessons and Carols. Seminary Kantorei
10:45 a.m. Coffee Break
11:00 a.m. "Lutheran Liturgy and Hymnody with Limited Resources." Dr. Carl F. Schalk, Professor of Music, Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois

Information on registration fees, accommodations, and meals with respect to one or more of the symposia described above may be obtained from the Office of Seminary Relations, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825. The telephone number of the seminary is 219-481-2100.

Bach and Pietism: Similarities Today

Robin A. Leaver

The topic of this essay is controversial—controversial in regard to Bach, controversial in regard to Pietism, and controversial in regard to any similarities we might encounter between Bach's relationship to Pietism and what is happening in many churches today. The basic problem is that there is much misperception of what Pietism was and much misunderstanding of Bach's relation to Pietism. The literature on Pietism is confusing in that many different and conflicting opinions are propounded concerning the nature of the movement and its relation to Lutheran Orthodoxy. Similarly, there is no unanimity in Bach literature on the subject of the cantor's relationship to Pietism.

I propose first to review some of the contemporary assessments of Bach and Pietism in order to discover the presuppositions regarding both Pietism and Bach's relation to it; then to examine the basic features of the Pietist movement of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and to test the contemporary presuppositions against the evidence; then, in this light to re-examine various aspects of Bach's career and compositions; and, finally, to begin to address the question of the parallels between Bach's day and our own. So, we shall begin where we are today, then work retrospectively into the origins of Pietism, then from there proceed prospectively, via Bach's life and works, back to the present. The hope is that we shall not find ourselves in exactly the same place from which we started, but shall have come to a new position that gives us a different vantage point, from which our view of Bach, Pietism, and our contemporary situation will be somewhat clearer.

Contemporary Views of Bach and Pietism

In his book *Church Music and Theology*, originally published in 1959, Erik Routley included a discussion of various aspects of Bach, with a section on "Bach and Pietism." Twenty years later the book was substantially revised and reissued as *Church Music and the Christian Faith.*[1] The section on Bach and Pietism is virtually unchanged in the revised version of the book. Routley first summarizes his understanding of Pietism:

> In modern terms [Pietism] adds up to a fundamentalist outlook, a layman's religious movement, a contempt for the academic and cerebral aspects of Christian practice, a stress on interdenominationalism, a preference for prayer over instruction, and a system of conversion.[2]

Routley then comes to the following judgment regarding Bach and Pietism:

> It is helpful in understanding Bach's religious background to note that he was, to all intents and purposes, moving among and faithful to groups of loyal Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship adherents; for that is exactly what, in its day, pietism was.[3]

The implication is that Routley sees Bach as the ardent devotee of the informal prayer meeting, with a primary concern for cultivating his relationship to Jesus Christ, after experiencing the "new birth" of conversion.

For the evidence of Bach's Pietism Routley looks to the libretti of the choral works, especially the cantatas and passions, and concludes that they are "innocent of any rejoicing in the resurrection."[4] He states further that "pietism reserves all its expository energies for the passion, all its theological attention for the atonement, and all its sense of liturgical drama to this one occasion." He concludes, that "we must ascribe to this religious culture everything distinctive about the Bach Passions."[5] Several paragraphs later he makes the categorical statement: "Bach's Passions are entirely unliturgical"; and the explanation is that "pietism was unliturgical."[6] So, for Routley, Bach was a Pietist, little interested in the outward forms of liturgical worship and much more concerned with inward religion, which he expressed in his music with consummate skill and artistry.

A more recent writer on the subject is Jaroslav Pelikan, the distinguished historical theologian of Yale University. In his book *Bach Among the Theologians*, issued in 1986, there is a fairly substantial chapter entitled: "Pietism, Piety, and Devotion in Bach's Cantatas."[7] Pelikan's analysis of Pietism deals primarily with the hallmarks of the spirituality of the movement. One of these is the awareness of sin as *Angst* [anxiety], in contrast to Luther's *Anfechtung* [temptation]. This anxiety over one's sinful state represented a theological shift from an understanding of sin as a state of being to a

preoccupation with sins as acts of volition. Pietism was in fact a new Puritanism. Pelikan quotes the "Rules for the Protection of Conscience and for Good Order in Conversation or in Society," written by August Hermann Francke, the leader of Pietism, in 1689:

> Games and other pastimes, such as dancing, jumping, and so forth, arise from an improper and empty manner of life, and common and unchaste postures in speech are associated with them.[8]

Another hallmark of Pietism to which Pelikan draws attention is subjectivity:

> . . .the way Pietism came to interpret the relation of the soul to Jesus entailed a shift in emphasis from objective to subjective, from the idea of 'Christ *for* us,' which had predominated in orthodox interpretations both before and after the reformation, to a primary interest in 'Christ *in* us,' which had never been absent from orthodoxy but which had been pronouncedly subordinated to the primary concern with the objectivity of the Gospel history and of the redemptive transaction on the historic cross.[9]

In passing, I should comment that we have here an example of the difficulty in coming to terms with the issue at hand. For when Routley and Pelikan are compared, one says the emphasis on the passion is a mark of Pietism, while for the other it is a mark of Orthodoxy.

Pelikan examines the cantatas of Bach and finds that *Angst* is a common theme, as is the emphasis on "Christ in us," especially in the frequent use of bride-bridegroom imagery. These are for Pelikan illustrations of the position he adopts early in the chapter. Although he carefully avoids calling Bach a Pietist, he states:

> All the attempts by Orthodox Lutheran confessionalists, in his time or ours, to lay claim to Bach as a member of their theological party will shatter against the texts of the cantatas and Passions, many (though by no means all) of which are permeated by the spirit of Pietism. Above all, the recitatives and arias...ring all the changes and sound all the themes of eighteenth-century Pietism: all the intense subjectivity, the moral earnestness, and the rococo metaphors of Pietist homiletics, devotion, and verse.[10]

Although there are differences between them, both Routley and Pelikan are agreed on the basic presuppositions that Pietism was essentially a movement of renewed spirituality and that the intrinsic characteristics of Pietist devotion are found in the cantatas and passions of Bach.[11] In actuality, however, do these analyses expose the heart of Pietism, and, therefore, do they provide the adequate background to explain Bach's relation to Pietism?

Lutheran Pietism

"Pietism" is a difficult term to use without qualification because so many different things are denoted by it. It is frequently used today as a general term for any kind of subjective spirituality. When it is used in a historical context, it is often employed to designate the widespread movement of spirituality that extended throughout Europe from the seventeenth century on, that has its roots in Reformed-Calvinist theology, but which has parallels in different denominational expressions, such as Anglican, Presbyterian, Moravian, Lutheran, Methodist, and so forth. But when investigating Bach, one must use the term in a much more restricted sense. "Pietism" in this context denotes the movement within the Lutheran Church which began around 1675 and reached its peak during the first two decades of the eighteenth century.[12] Therefore, the interdenominational aspects of general Pietism, appealed to by Routley, are invalid for a discussion of the Lutheran Bach. He did not meet informally for prayer and Bible study with Christians of different confessions. Indeed, the evidence is quite the opposite. While he was *Kapellmeister* to the Calvinist court in Anhalt-Cöthen, between 1717 and 1723, Bach and his family did not worship with the Calvinists but became members of the small local Lutheran congregation. Whatever contact Bach had with Pietism was with this more narrowly defined Lutheran Pietism.

Lutheran Pietism was part of the general renewal movement that followed in the wake of the devastation of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). When the externals of life are destroyed it is a natural response to turn inward to find consolation and spiritual strength. During the Thirty Years War this inward spirituality was sustained by such books as Johann Gerhard's *Meditationes Sacrae ad Verum Pietatem Excitandam*, first

published in 1606, and Johann Arndt's *Wahres Christenthum*, issued in six books between 1606 and 1609. After the war such spirituality was fostered in the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, which began appearing in print in the 1650's. But in the technical sense the Pietist Movement within Lutheranism had not yet begun.[13] It is exactly here that many misconceptions and misunderstandings have their origin. Expressions of personal piety in such writings have been taken to be the marks of Pietism in a technical sense. But this simple equation of piety with Pietism is invalid and does not take into account the long line of devotional writing within the Lutheran Church. Luther himself uses the bride-bridegroom imagery in His writings from time to time, notably in the treatise *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520). An *Erbauungsliteratur* of devotional handbooks and sermons served subsequent generations of Lutheran Orthodoxy.

Although the Pietists attacked the Orthodox for their preoccupation with polemics, they proved themselves to be masters of propaganda. They created the impression that Lutheran Orthodoxy was uniformly formalistic, dry, and intellectual in its preaching and teaching and that only they and their followers promoted a warm, devotional, and practical Christianity. Of course, their criticisms did apply in some areas of the Lutheran Church, but the Pietists did not have a monopoly on piety. For example, Orthodox Leipzig in the early 1700's was noted for its lively preaching and went through an extraordinary period when long-closed churches were refurbished and reopened and when the other churches in the city were enlarged, all in response to the growth in church membership under the leadership of Orthodox rather than Pietist clergy.[14]

If the Pietists had been concerned only with spirituality, then the Orthodox-Pietist controversy within Lutheranism would hardly have been noticed. The truth is that the Pietists had much wider concerns than simply intensifying spiritual life. At root Pietism was a holiness movement that involved a re-evaluation of confessional Lutheran theology. The six-point agenda was set by Philipp Jakob Spener in his pamphlet *Pia Desideria* ("Pious Desires"),[15] which was originally published as an introduction to Arndt's *Wahres Christenthum* in 1675:

1. Christians ought to read from the Bible daily and to study passages at weekly home meetings with neighbors and friends.
2. Every Christian, not only the minister, is called to lead a holy life.
3. The Christian must be known by his actions, not merely by his knowledge of doctrine.
4. Theological controversy and confessional polemics, now prevalent in the church, must be reduced.
5. Theology students ought to take part in *collegia*, or Bible study meetings for devotional study.
6. Sermons ought to illustrate how to lead a Christian life, not present a rhetorical argument.[16]

As I have argued elsewhere, the basic difference between Orthodoxy and Pietism within Lutheranism was, in the first place, ecclesiological rather than a question of the nature of devotional life.[17] The formation of the *collegia pietatis* for weekly Bible study and prayer, in the pursuit of holiness of life, marked a modification of the doctrine of the church: they were *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, little churches in the church. Article VII of the Augsburg Confession gives this definition of the church:

> [The] one holy Christian church. . .is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel.[18]

In other words, the church is the community of faith, within which the word is read and expounded and the sacraments of baptism and communion are observed. In the following article (Article VIII) there is the further clarification that within the visible church there may well be "false Christians, hypocrites, and even open sinners,"[19] but their presence within it does not undermine the doctrine of the church, nor invalidate the efficacy of the sacraments.

The Pietists were not so sure. Their call for holiness of life on the part of individual Christians was also a means of purifying the corporate church. But this purification did not take place through the activity of liturgical worship Sunday by Sunday, but rather through the exercises of the *collegia pietatis*, the small groups that met for Bible study and prayer.

Those who met in the *collegia pietatis* were those who had experienced the "new birth" of conversion and were thus "true Christians." It was but a small step in logic to conclude that, if the *collegia pietatis* were made up of true Christians, then the *collegia pietatis* comprised the true church and that, if they were the true church, then the outward manifestation of public worship within Lutheranism would be purified when the activities of the *collegia pietatis* were transferred to the local parish churches.

August Hermann Francke argued that the Reformation of the sixteenth century had never been completed. It was good as far as it went, but there was more reforming to be done, and the Pietists regarded themselves as the latter-day reformers who would do it. The Augsburg Confession had stated (in Article XV) that the holy days and festivals of the church year could be observed "without sin" and (in Article XXIV) that no conspicuous changes had been made to the ceremonies of the mass, since "the chief purpose of all ceremonies is to teach the people what they need to know about Christ."[20] The Pietists did not accept this confessional statement but argued that such ceremonies, together with various practices associated with them, were in need of reform. However, their program of reformation was essentially a process of elimination. Eucharistic vestments and exorcism at baptism were remnants of unreformed Catholicism and had to be discontinued. Similarly, the rigidity of the annual cycle of epistles and gospels of the church year had to give way to a more thorough sequence of biblical readings. All elaborate music at worship was considered to be worldly ostentation, which had to be replaced by simple, devotional hymnody, to be sung not to the "heavy" chorale tunes of Luther's generation, but to the lighter and more accessible tunes that the Pietists sang in their *collegia pietatis.*

The Pietist hymnal was Freylinghausen's *Geistreiches Gesangbuch* (Halle, 1704). Much of the controversy between Orthodoxy and Pietism centered on this hymnal. In 1716 the Wittenberg theological faculty issued an assessment of the hymnal and declared, on theological grounds, that it was suspect and therefore could not be recommended for use either in church or in the home.[21] In particular, the Wittenberg theologians criticized the omission of classic hymns that deal with the fundamentals of Lutheran theology, such as Luther's

"Erhalt Uns bei Deinem Wort" ("Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word"). They also gave detailed criticism of individual hymns. The second stanza of Johann Adam Haslocher's "Du Sagst, Ich Bin ein Christ" ("You say, 'I am a Christian'") ran as follows:

> You say, "I am a Christian."
> He is a Christian who knows Jesus.
> Not only does he name his God and Lord,
> But also diligently does what His commandment requires.
> Not to do so makes whatever you say a mockery.

The Wittenberg theologians comment: "This definition is wrong, for a Christian is so called because of his belief in Christ, not because of his obedience to the Lord's commandments."[22] It was a continuing concern for Lutheran Orthodoxy that the Pietists had become Crypto-Calvinists by rejecting the Orthodox understanding of the *analogia fidei*, the analogy of faith, the sequential and distinct operation of law and gospel, and had made obedience mandatory to faith.

Another hymn criticized by the Wittenberg theologians is Ludwig Andreas Gotter's "Treuer Vater und Deine Liebe" ("True Father and Thy Love"). Stanza 3 ran as follows:

> Since I thought I was a Christian
> And knew how to speak about it,
> I needed the church and altar,
> I sang and gave to the poor.
> I had no terrible vices,
> And yet it was only hypocrisy.[23]

Here services of public worship are denigrated as outward formalism that is harmful to spiritual life. As the Pietist Movement progressed, together with this devaluation of external worship, there was a greater emphasis on internal worship and the direct illumination of the Holy Spirit. This development was a further concern to Orthodox theologians, who could point to Article V of the Augsburg Confession, which states that faith comes through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, and not by some independent inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Lutheran Pietism, therefore, had theological, liturgical, and musical implications which went far beyond its spiritual intensity.

Pietism and Bach

Was Bach a Pietist? The answer to such a question would have to be an emphatic negative. Where we have evidence of tension between Orthodoxy and Pietism during Bach's lifetime, Bach is always found on the side of Orthodoxy. At an early date, probably while Bach was still in his teens, he became friends with Erdmann Neumeister. Both had connections with the court of Weissenfels, for whose chapel Neumeister wrote cantata texts in 1700, which were published in 1704, the year Neumeister became the court chaplain in Weissenfels. These libretti are important in that, for the first time, operatic recitatives and arias, especially the *da capo* aria, were employed within the church cantata form. Had Neumeister been a Pietist, the thought of using such a theatrical form for Christian worship would never have entered his head. Neumeister was, in fact, a staunchly Orthodox theologian, who had studied theology in Leipzig. He was in Leipzig at the same time as August Hermann Francke before Francke was expelled and moved to Halle. Indeed, Francke made a deep impression on Neumeister. But this impression was quickly dispelled when he heard Francke call Luther's Bible translation into question and criticize the Lutheran Reformation for not going far enough. Thereafter Neumeister became a vigorous opponent of Pietism. But this position did not mean that he therefore wrote cantata libretti in a dry and detached style—by no means! His libretti are full of robust piety and warm, vibrant devotional poetry. Much of Neumeister's imagery may appear to be similar to that of the Pietists, but the theological content and context are clearly Orthodox. Over the years Bach composed music for at least five of Neumeister's libretti, Cantatas 18, 24, 28, 59, 61, and possibly 79, and when Neumeister was pastor of the Jacobikirche in Hamburg in 1720, he attempted to have Bach appointed as the organist of his church.[24] The implication comes across very strongly that here were two like-minded colleagues.

Between 1707 and 1708 Bach was the organist of the St. Blasius Church in Mühlhausen. Among his predecessors were the father and son Johann Rudolf and Johann Georg Ahle, musicians of known Pietist sympathies; and the pastor of the church, Johann Adolph Frohne, with whom Bach worked, was a dedicated and militant Pietist. During Bach's short time in the town it is significant that he appears to have become a close

friend of Georg Christian Eilmar, the Orthodox pastor of St. Mary's Church in Mühlhausen, to whom Frohne was in frequent opposition. Bach's Cantata 131 was commissioned by Eilmar, who may have had a hand in writing the libretto, and performed in St. Mary's Church, rather than St. Blasius Church. The Orthodox pastor was also godfather to Bach's firstborn child, Catharina Dorothea, during this time.[25] Having been in Mühlhausen for just about a year, Bach requested permission to leave in a letter dated 25 June 1708. In it he wrote as follows:

> Even though I should always have liked to work toward the goal, . . .[of] a well-regulated church music, to the glory of God. . .and would, according to my small means, have helped out as much as possible with the church music that is growing up in almost every township, and often better than the harmony that is fashioned here. . .yet it has not been possible to accomplish all this without hindrance, and there are, at present, hardly any signs that in future a change may take place. . . Now, God has brought it to pass that an unexpected change should offer itself to me, in which I see the possibility of a more adequate living and the achievement of my goal of a well-regulated church music without further vexation. . .[26]

The vexations and hindrances to his "goal" of "a well-regulated church music"—significantly mentioned twice in almost the same words—are probably references to the unsympathetic attitude of the Pietist Frohne toward the kind of music with which Bach wanted to be involved.

Similarly, when Bach was appointed to a position in Leipzig in 1723 he appears to have been on friendly terms with the Orthodox clergy.[27] The leading clergy with whom Bach worked were also on the theological faculty of the university, among them Solomon Deyling, superintendent of Leipzig for the whole of Bach's time in the city, and Johann Gottlob Carpzov, Hebraist and Archdeacon of the Thomaskirche. Carpzov's daughter stood as godparent to one of Bach's children;[28] after he moved to Lübeck in 1730, Carpzov was involved on the Orthodox side in various controversies with the Pietists. The Leipzig theological faculty, which included both Deyling and Carpzov, was the bastion of Orthodox Lutheranism, and when appealed to again and again in disputes over Pietism, it always

came down on the side of Orthodoxy and against Pietism. Thus, the context for Bach's life and work in Leipzig was markedly Orthodox.[29]

It is at this juncture that we need to raise two related questions. First, would Bach have been happy among the Pietists? Secondly, would the Pietists have wanted to own Bach as one of their adherents? Again, both answers have to be negative. For Bach to have joined the Pietists would have meant resigning from his position in Leipzig. The Pietists argued for the elimination of elaborate music from the liturgy (allowing only simple congregational song) and the reduction of liturgical form to a basic sequence of hymns, prayers, biblical readings, and sermon. The liturgy in Leipzig was a magnificent amalgam of the traditional structure of the old Lutheran mass with all the propers (some of it still in Latin), congregational hymnody, ecclesiastical monody, a one-hour sermon, and, like a gemstone in a chaste platinum setting, the cantata—a rich combination of choral, vocal, and instrumental sound, which functioned as a liturgical proper for the day.[30] These were all things that the Orthodox were intent on retaining and that the Pietists wished to eliminate from the worship of the church. The Pietists argued that such things were formalistic and diverted the congregation from true spiritual worship; the Orthodox asserted that they were the substance of liturgical and devotional life.[31]

No shred of evidence can be found to link Bach with the viewpoint of the Pietists, but there is much evidence that theologically he sided with the Orthodox. In many of the complaints he made, either to the church consistory, city council, or school authorities, Bach's principal concern was with what he saw as the erosion of the role of music within the liturgy. For example, he wrote a memorandum to the city council in the summer of 1730 and headed it as a "short but most necessary draft for a well-appointed church music, with certain modest reflections on the decline of the same." In this memorandum Bach states that the church music of the city was in jeopardy; he just did not have the necessary singers and players for what needed to be done. He stated that his minimum requirements were thirty-six good singers and eighteen good instrumentalists.[32] The Pietists would have thrown up their hands in horror at such a suggestion.

Another example would be Bach's dispute with the rector of the St. Thomas School in 1736 over the question of the appointment of prefects in the school.[33] Theretofore the cantor, that is, Bach, had appointed prefects, because they had to take musical leadership in some of the churches. Then the rector arbitrarily decided that he would appoint the prefects, and chose non-musical ones. Bach objected on the grounds that, if this practice were not reversed, then the highly developed music of the church, which the schoolboys provided under the leadership of Bach, could not survive. Again, no Pietist could have found himself arguing from Bach's position. Then there is the other question: Would the Pietists have wanted to own Bach as one of their adherents? From the facts we have just reviewed, clearly they would not.

From all this evidence it can be seen that some of the presuppositions of Routley and Pelikan are based on either wrong or incomplete information. But what shall we say of their other presuppositions? We can take Routley first. His implication that Bach was a Pietist who attended the informal meetings of the *collegia pietatis* is misinformation. There is no evidence that Bach was a Pietist or went to Pietist meetings for prayer and Bible study. Indeed, the evidence points to the opposite conclusion. Furthermore, Routley's view that there is no rejoicing in the resurrection in Bach's choral works is untenable. The truth is that there are resurrection themes everywhere in Bach's works. Bach has certainly been charged with having a preoccupation with death, a theme frequently recurring in his choral works.[34] But when one examines this concentration on the subject of death, one will find that the works of Bach are not filled with hopeless remorse but that the note of resurrection is always sounded. Obvious examples are found in his funeral music, such as the early cantata (BWV 106) "Gottes Zeit ist der Allerbestes Zeit" and the later motet (BWV 118) "O Jesu Christ, Meins Lebens Licht." But even more direct than this evidence is the unequivocal "et resurrexit" of the B-Minor Mass, with its exuberant fanfares, celebrating the joy of faith in the resurrection.

Routley is right when he states that "Pietism was unliturgical"; but he is quite wrong when he asserts that "Bach's passions are entirely unliturgical." As I have sought to show in my small book *J.S. Bach as Preacher: His Passions and Music in Worship*,[35] the passions of Bach cannot be understood

without appreciation of the fact that they were written and first performed as liturgical music. The context of the Bach passions was the vespers service on the afternoon of Good Friday. His passions were performed within a liturgical sequence of prayers, congregational hymns, motets, and a substantial sermon that was preached between the two halves of the passion. For Bach, his passions did not exist in their own right, like an Handelian oratorio; they were rather musical expositions of the passion of Christ set within a particular liturgical framework.

This presupposition that the passions and cantatas of Bach were unliturgical appears to lie behind Pelikan's arguments also. Since he discovers in the cantatas of Bach an emphasis on the indwelling Christ, he equates it with the primary Pietist concern with the individual's union with Christ, a mystical and spiritual union that is subjective and internal and exists without the context of public worship. Pelikan's exegesis would be quite correct if the cantatas were independent pieces in their own right. But the fact is that the cantatas were fundamentally liturgical.[36] As stated earlier, the cantata of the day was in essence a proper, related both to the epistle and gospel of the day and to the sermon. But the context was not only liturgical; it was also eucharistic. Thus the "Christ in me" emphasis in Bach's cantatas is not the hallmark of the spirituality of Pietism; it is instead the hallmark of Orthodox eucharistic devotion. "Christ for you" is the objective proclamation of the gospel in the eucharist, and "Christ in me" articulates the subjective response of faith to the gospel of the eucharist.

Another thing which Pelikan appears to have missed is the exposition of the analogy of faith in Bach's cantatas. Instead of the Pietist order of salvation, focussing on conversion, the cantatas deal with the dialectic tension between law and gospel. Many cantatas have a similar ground plan. In the opening chorus the problem is stated, that is, the demands of the law; a recitative and aria draw out some of the implications; then, approximately midway though the cantata, the problem is resolved, that is, the Gospel is proclaimed; a note of joy in the gospel is heard in the following aria or arias; and the cantata concludes with the chorale, which underscores the message of the gospel with a statement of faith. One has to conclude that, although the contents of Bach's cantatas may have the appearance of Pietism in imagery and expression, the

liturgical purpose, the eucharistic context, and the theological content mark these cantatas as the product of a vibrant and lively Lutheran Orthodoxy.[37]

Contemporary Implications

We do not have to look very far to see that today there is a new spirit of pietism abroad, a pietism that sees the essence of Christianity in the small, informal group, rather than in the total community of faith at worship within a recognized and formal liturgical order.[38] It is a pietism that measures its success by the number of people it touches, rather than by the truth of the message it proclaims. It is a pietism that is preoccupied with "simple hymns" and informal structures of worship. It is a pietism that is impatient with the German Reformation of the sixteenth century, a pietism that asserts that we need new forms and less of the old. It is a new spirit of pietism that looks in many respects like the old pietism—the Pietism in the technical sense which we have considered here.

The leading question, of course, is this: Where did the old pietism lead? By the end of the eighteenth century German Lutheranism had almost disappeared. Liturgical forms had been eliminated, the highly developed church music of Bach and his contemporaries was no longer heard in the churches, and the content of the Christian faith had been watered down to little more than Unitarianism, with an invertebrate spirituality lacking the backbone of confessional theology. Instead of leading to a period of growth of the church, Pietism precipitated an era of decline of the church, a situation which was not reversed until, around the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a recovery of Lutheran confessional theology, Lutheran liturgical practice, and Lutheran church music,[39] that is, a recovery of those things with which Bach was so intimately concerned.

ENDNOTES

1. Erik Routley, *Church Music and the Christian Faith* (Carol Stream: Agapē, 1978), pp. 54-58.

2. Ibid., pp. 54-55.
3. Ibid., p. 55.
4. Loc. cit. Routley's conclusion is based on the listing of biblical texts set by Bach found in William H. Scheide, *Johann Sebastian Bach as a Biblical Interpreter* (Princeton: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1952), pp. 37-38. However, this listing, like others [see Robin A. Leaver, ed., *J.S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985), p. 100], is minimal, recording only the movements of cantatas which comprise purely biblical text. It does not record the many scriptural quotations that can be found imbedded within the cantata libretti. Dr. Ulrich Meyer of Gifhorn, Germany, has completed a valuable analysis of the biblical basis of the libretti of Bach's cantatas, *Bibelwort and Bibelwortanklang in J.S. Bachs Kantatentexten*, which is, as yet, still unpublished.
5. Routley, *Church Music*, p. 56.
6. Ibid., p. 57.
7. Jaroslav Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), pp. 56-71.
8. Peter C. Erb, ed., *The Pietists: Selected Writings*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), p. 111, cited by Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians*, p. 59.
9. Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians*, p. 65.
10. Ibid., p. 57.
11. The same presuppositions are found, for example, in June L. Saler, "The Theological Influence of the Pietist Movement on the Texts of Bach's Cantatas," master's thesis, California State University, Fullerton, 1982.
12. The two books by F. Ernest Stoeffler remain the basic literature in English: *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965); and *German Pietism in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973).
13. For example, James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1989), p. 52, gives what he regards as a representative list of Pietist hymnwriters and composers: Paul Gerhardt, Johann Franck (who is confused with August Hermann Francke), Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Pachelbel, and Johann Sebastian Bach. Although men of distinctive piety, not one was a Pietist; they were actually Orthodox hymnwriters and composers.

14. See Günther Stiller, *Johann Sebastian Bach and Liturgical Life in Leipzig*, ed. Robin A. Leaver (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984), pp. 39-48.

15. Philipp Jakob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964).

16. Spener is cited by Dianne M. McMullen, "The Geistreiches Gesangbuch of Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen (1670-1739): A German Pietist Hymnal," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987, p. 224.

17. Robin A. Leaver, *J.S. Bach as Preacher: His Passions and Music in Worship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984), p. 12.

18. *The Book of Concord*, trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 32.

19. *Book of Concord*, p. 33.

20. *Book of Concord*, pp. 36 and 56.

21. The document is presented both in the German and in an English translation in McMullen, "Geistreiches Gesangbuch," pp. 567-631.

22. Ibid., p. 578.

23. Loc. cit.

24. See Robin A. Leaver, "The Libretto of Bach's Cantata 79: A Conjecture," *Bach: The Quarterly Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*, 6:1 (January, 1975), pp. 3-11.

25. *Bach Dokumente*, ed. Werner Neumann and Hans-Joachim Schulze, 4 vols. (Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1963-1979; hereafter cited as BD), 1:37.

26. BD, 1:19-20; *The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, ed. H.T. David and A. Mendel (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966; hereafter cited as BR), p. 60.

27. See Stiller, *Liturgical Life*, pp. 67 and 102.

28. BD, 2:200.

29. In recent studies of Bach's relationship to the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, the common conclusion is that Bach was theologically Orthodox: see Paul S. Minear, "J.S. Bach and J.A. Ernesti: A Case Study in Exegetical and Theological Conflict," *Our Common History as Christians: Essays in Honor of Albert C. Outler*, ed. John Descher, Leroy T. Howe, and Klaus Penzel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 131-155; Ulrich Siegele, "Bachs Ort in Orthodoxie und Aufklärung,"

Musik und Kirche, 51 (1981), pp. 3-14; Martin Petzoldt, "Zwischen Orthodoxie, Pietismus und Aufklärung: Überlegungen zum theologiegeschichtlichen Kontext von Johann Sebastian Bach," *Johann Sebastian Bach und die Aufklärung*, ed. Reinhard Szeskus, Bach-Studien, 7 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1982), pp. 66-108.

30. For Bach's theological understanding of the role of music in worship, see, for example, his marginalia entered in his copy of Abraham Calov, *Die Deutsche Bibel* (Wittenberg: Christian Schröter, 1681-1682); cf. Leaver, *Bach and Scripture*, pp. 93-96.

31. Although Orthodox Lutheran theologians agreed that music in worship was to be classified as adiaphora and thus technically excludable, in practice they regarded it as indispensable; see Joyce Irwin, "Music and the Doctrine of Adiaphora in Orthodox Lutheran Theology," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 14 (1983), pp. 157-172; Robin A. Leaver, "Lutheran Vespers as a Context for Music," *Church, Stage, and Studio: Music and Its Contexts in Seventeenth-Century Germany*, ed. Paul Walker (Ann Arbor: U.M.I. Research Press, 1990), pp. 143-161.

32. BD, 1:600-601; BR, p. 121.

33. See BD, 1:82-89; BR, pp. 137-149.

34. See Paul F. Foelber, *Bach's Treatment of the Subject of Death in His Choral Music* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1961); Paul S. Minear, *Death Set to Music: Masterworks by Bach, Brahms, Penderecki, Bernstein* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), pp. 43-57.

35. See note 17 above.

36. See Robin A. Leaver, "The Liturgical Place and Homiletic Purpose of Bach's Cantatas," *Worship*, 59 (1985), pp. 194-202.

37. Compare the similar conclusions in Hans L. Holborn, "Bach and Pietism: The Relationship of the Church Music of Johann Sebastian Bach to Eighteenth-Century Lutheran Orthodoxy and Pietism with Special Reference to the *Saint Matthew Passion*," D. Min. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1976.

38. For the influence of Pietism on earlier generations of American Lutherans, see F. Ernest Stoeffler, *Mysticism in the German Devotional Literature of Colonial Pennsylvania* (Allentown, Pennsylvania: Schlechter, 1950); Paul P. Keuning, *The Rise and Fall of American Lutheran Pietism: The Rejection of an Activist Heritage* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1988).

39. It is not without significance that the "Bach revival" is also to be dated within this same period.

The Plague of Generic Preaching

Donald L. Deffner

Walter Burghardt stated an essential concern of preachers in an especially provocative way when he entitled an article "Saturday Night Live, Sunday Morning Deadly?"[1] That question reminds me of a conversation which I once had with a friend as we walked away—unfed—from a particularly boring sermon:

Attempting to defend the fiasco, he began, "Well, at least he preached the gospel."

"No, he didn't," I replied.

"But the words of the gospel were there. . .," my friend continued falteringly, "and Scripture says, 'My Word shall not return void!'"

"True," I rejoined. "The word of God has power beyond measure. But the statement, 'The word of God does its own work,' can also be misapplied to defend a loutish sermon. We can find comfort in that statement, but not support from it for bad preaching. To 'preach the gospel' means to communicate it. Even with a sermon which is perfectly arranged, if one preaches it in French to a Japanese congregation, he hasn't 'preached the gospel.' 'Communication' means that someone sends out a signal, people understand it, react to it, and respond to it—even if it means a punch in the nose at the church door. That's communication. It's a two-way street. But that preacher is just not connecting with his people."

The particular preacher in question had been guilty of generic preaching. The word "generic" means "of, applied to, or referring to a kind, class, or group; inclusive or general; opposed to specific, special." The preacher in the anecdote had not addressed the text to the specific needs of people and so had not applied the law and gospel which they needed to hear, as Scripture does. The preaching had been general, broad, vague, even bland. Thus, the people had become "the bland being led by the bland."

Savonarola once compared some parishioners to birds roosting on a church steeple. At first the striking of the bell aroused and frightened them. But the days came when, accustomed to the sound, they perched quietly on the bell, no matter how loudly it rang.

A review in *The Cresset* once commented in this way on the irrelevance of much preaching:

> One of the nice things about going to church on Sunday is that it is about the only contact that most of us still have with the dear dead days of the nineteenth century. The vocabulary of piety is still redolent of those "good old days" when the parson was the most learned man in the village and his sermon was as much a literary *oeuvre* as it was a disquisition upon the Word of God. Whether it was at all intelligible to our grandfathers is a question which would be difficult, at this late date, to answer. Certainly much of the charm of much modern preaching derives from the fact that the grand old words—unintelligible as they may be to modern ears—still roll from the pulpit familiarly and predictably, saying nothing in particular but enfolding the congregation in a mantle of familiar sounds.[2]

Simeon Stylites described a preacher who was not reaching his people in picturesque words:

> To hear him was like quietly getting drunk. He led his hearers by easy stages into an unreal world of effortless peace, dragging them gradually into unconsciousness by the melody that was himself. They went home to eat their Sunday dinners in dazed silence, and remained befuddled until Monday morning, when they woke up and went about their business.[3]

Why do some people fall asleep during the sermon? Is it because the secular world in which they live has so absorbed them that "God-talk" is no longer relevant to them? Is it because the preacher is not speaking to the specific needs and problems they are encountering? Is it simply because the preacher is the same every Sunday—a generic preacher? Here is an example of generic preaching:

> God created a perfect world. He created it in all its splendor and beauty. The world was perfect until Adam's fall. God could see it coming. God foresaw man's rebellion. I'm sure God was very disappointed with man, but He did not give up on us. Right after the fall, God cursed the devil: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head and you will strike His heel" (Genesis 3:15). God promised that Satan's evil would be defeated. The prophet Isaiah writes, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:

the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel (God with us)" (Isaiah 7:14). Imagine—God incarnate walking among His people—and we nailed Him to a cross.

God knew from the beginning that, even though He gave Moses the law, that was not going to be enough for man's reunion with Him in eternity. The law had become tainted and twisted to serve man more than God. Satan was establishing a stronghold on the earth. Many people were secure in their sins. Oh, there was the cry for a deliverer, a Messiah, but more for relief from the Romans—to bring earthly peace and prosperity. Through all this, God never gave up on man. . . .

The world was wilting, dying—full of guilt. Man needed to be saved from his death in sin. He could do nothing on his own to save himself.

The Son of God, Christ Jesus, came to save man. In Jesus' baptism, Jesus being a humble servant to the Father, was anointed into His ministry. On this occasion, as well as others, God spoke out from the heavens and said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him." Instead, we nailed Him to a cross.

All through Jesus' ministry, He sought to bring peace, comfort, and order to individual hearts. For this we crucified Him on a cross. . .

God has revealed to us who Jesus is through His word and sacraments. It is by these means of grace that the Holy Spirit works on our hearts to believe. Scripture reveals that God cared enough about us to come down to earth and live with us. Jesus experienced temptation, pain, sorrow, and death, so that we might be saved from eternal separation from God. It is this man, Jesus, the Son of God, whom we confess to be born of a virgin, who suffered the daily strife of life, who humbled Himself to serve and not be served—that is Jesus Christ who saved mankind from eternal damnation because of sin. . .

How can we lift high the cross? We can do this by worshipping together, bringing our children to baptism, and remembering our own baptismal promise. We lift high the cross by partaking of the Lord's Supper where

> He is still present with us in His flesh and by studying His word daily where His tender mercies are revealed. We can look to the cross when we pray, for Jesus promises to help bear the crosses in our lives. We can come to that cross out of love and not out of shame. As we go out into our world in the light of that cross, we can say:
>
> Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,
> Till all the world adore His sacred name![4]

What the preacher said above is true. But it is stated in simplistic terms—and as if people had never heard it before. Our people need to hear the law and gospel again and again, but in fresh and picturesque speech. We are not to talk *about* the fall and the atonement, but to apply it in illustrative and contemporary language to people's lives.

What is missing in generic preaching? First of all, the hearer is not immediately involved. Wallace E. Fisher states:

> Americans go to the theater to be entertained, to the university to be educated, to a daily job to make a livelihood, and to the beach, the mountains, Las Vegas, and the Alps for recreation. But they must shift their intellectual and emotional gears hard to hear the Word—and harder still to do it.[5]

What is needed is more problem-resolution preaching (which is law and gospel).[6] There are various types of outlines, of course, and there is a time and place for the "teaching sermon" (we used to have Sunday evening services). But the man on the street who wanders into a church—indeed, our own secular-world people—will not be grabbed by a sermon with the theme "Christ is Your (A.) Prophet, (B.) Priest, and (C.) King."

In *The Homiletical Plot* Eugene L. Lowry suggests a sequence for the sermonic process which will shake the natural man's cocoon and confront the *peccator* in our own people. Again law and gospel are implicit here. One can visualize a loop along which the following states appear:

1. upsetting the equilibrium
2. analyzing the discrepancy
3. disclosing the clue to resolution
4. experiencing the gospel
5. anticipating the consequences

One can sense the progression quite vividly: (1.) "Oops!" We experience imbalance. We see that something is wrong here! (2.) "Ugh!" We see the dilemma. (3.) "Aha!" We see a clue. The puzzle is snapping into place. (4.) "Whee!" Here comes the "good news"—the experience of the gospel. The preacher is not moralizing: "Stop it." "Do this." "Don't do that." He is actually proclaiming the gospel's power. (5.) "Yeah!" The response is not "I've got it made," but "I've got the point, Pastor."[7]

A specific application of the law must be made early in the sermon (as well as specific non-generic application of the gospel later). The response is quite predictable if the preacher rambles on and on about the text for fifteen minutes and then finally says, "Well, what does this mean for us here today?" People will not only "nod noetically and go home"; they will have gone home already.

The "Oops!-Ugh!" of the dilemma (the "malady," as Caemmerer would call it) must grab people within the first minute of the sermon, and so we need an arresting introduction. This requisite does not mean we are to titillate. But we are to involve the hearer early on in the law's indictment in the text as it applies to the individual hearer. Otherwise "preaching-in-general" ensues.

Generic preaching also results when a preacher mistakenly tries to be an "exegetical-expositional" preacher in contrast to a false understanding of what "topical" preaching is. Bad "exegetical-expositional preaching" occurs when too much exegesis is dragged into the pulpit, and there is a dull verse-by-verse commentary on the text. Again the presumption is that the sheer statement of biblical truth is communication. People may be left to make application on their own. The preacher rambles over several ideas in the text, but fails to focus on one central theme. There is bad "topical preaching," to be sure. It occurs when a preacher chooses a theme and alludes to the text, but does not develop it. Such "topical preaching" involves little of the Bible and much religious-moral talk.

Actually, good "topical preaching" and good "exegetical-expositional preaching" are one and the same. The sermon is biblical and fully textual, but one clear theme is addressed, not several. Exegesis is implicit and interpretation of the text is thorough, but it is applied to life in the light of the "one clear idea."[8]

It is particularly boring when a preacher thinks he is a "biblical preacher" because he gives an account of the whole history of salvation every Sunday, even adding another rerun of the Garden of Eden story, as if people have never heard it before.[9] In contrast, fresh language produces a clear presentation of law and gospel in the following paragraphs by Richard Kapfer in a Lenten sermon on servanthood:

> Perhaps we need to equip our offices with fewer crosses and more towels and basins. Maybe instead of fish symbols on our doors and crosses on the walls of our homes we need pictures of feet and hands and a towel and basin. It's too bad Albrecht Dürer painted praying hands, for maybe wet hands would have been better! And maybe we ought to have drills on how to use towels and basins, much like learning CPR.
>
> Why are you and I here, anyway? That's the tap on the shoulder, the word from God dropped into our midst. Why was footwashing so important that Jesus did it? What has that to do with the 65 or 75 years that we are probably going to be here on this planet? How could *Jesus* stoop so low—and why would He tell us that *we* must stoop so low? What did He see in footwashing that He wants *us* to see? John tells us (John 13:3-4): "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside His garments. . ."
>
> Servant Jesus bends down from heaven to earth in order to wash us clean from sin. The One crowned with thorns comes to crown us as children of the Kingdom. The naked One comes to place on us the robes of righteousness. The crucified Christ arises from the grave to free us from the world's deadness and to give us a new vision of life and greatness.
>
> Conclusion: Renewal. Where should it begin, this renewal of servanthood? It may need to begin in your home, in your marriage, in your place of work. But most important, it must begin at the cross. Then let it happen from the cross through you, for Jesus Himself will hand you the towel and basin. He Himself will point you to where you should go. Most important, He Himself will go with you.[10]

There is, to be sure, a plague of generic preaching, but there are also many excellent preachers around who do preach creative, evangelical, and heart-warming sermons. Kapfer is just one example. Such preachers are to be heartily commended. What is it about their preaching that makes us want to come to hear them? Kapfer's treatment and application of the text is rich homiletical meat to savor. He has done all his exegetical work also. But it is not fed to his hearers undigested, lest the hearers should choke on it. Instead Kapfer makes exegesis an implicit part of what is finally preached. As W.A. Poovey says, exegesis "is not material to be lugged into the pulpit. . . .A good sermon is like a good dinner. You don't need to know all the processes that have been carried out in the kitchen, or in the study, but you want to know that something happened there."[11]

Alfred O. Fuerbringer (once president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis) used to say that some seminary professors had a way of "preaching in the classroom and lecturing in the pulpit." Some preachers today have a habit of preaching in the adult Bible class and conducting a Bible study in the pulpit. We should be biblical preachers and expound the text. But a sermon is not a Greek word study. The distinction between the aorist and the pluperfect is not unimportant. Determining the full significance of a Greek or Hebrew word is critical, and intricate textual analysis can be appropriate to the Bible class. In the sermon, however, the requisite exegesis is to be implicit and applied.

A "well-turned word" is a word that speaks afresh to a person today. "But I don't have that gift of language!" a preacher may respond. One can, however, preach a richer message—by the Holy Spirit's power and in one's own unique way of preaching with one's own gifts and limitations. The preacher must look to his Lord's style of preaching. (1.) He used illustrations. (2.) He asked inductive questions of His hearers. (3.) He utilized rich imagery.

What are "illustrations"? They are "the windows that let in the light" (Spurgeon). They intensify the applicability of biblical truth to everyday life and may take a variety of forms. Here are two examples, the first excerpted from a Good Friday sermon and the second from a sermon on the work of the Holy Spirit:

[A Good Friday Sermon: Introduction]

A pastor in the Pacific Northwest tells a moving story of the dramatization of Christ's trial and crucifixion by the youth group at his church. The youth director played the role of Christ, the youth the jeering mob.

"Crucify him! Crucify him!" they shouted, and then they dragged the youth director into the backyard of the church and hung him up on an improvised cross.

The pastor stood to the side of the assembly to "see how the drama was going." The youth were hushed now as "Christ" hung there and spoke these words to the youth group: "Even though you are doing this to me, I still love you."

And then, standing in the front of the group, the pastor noticed an eight-year-old girl, transfixed by the scene. He looked at her and saw real tears were streaming down her face.

"And," the pastor states, "I was envious of her. For us 'professionals' it was a 'performance.' For her, it was the real thing. She was there."

How often do you and I come to a Good Friday service and observe what is happening to Christ? But it is only that. We are spectators, not involved. And yet the Savior of the world is hanging there, suffering and dying for your and my sins on the cross.[12]

[A Sermon on the Holy Spirit's Work]

A minister tells of a woman, a happy and efficient wife of a fellow pastor, who was experiencing her full share of life's sunshine and shade, but no real darkness falling her way. And then, suddenly, without warning, her husband died of a heart attack, leaving her terribly alone and afraid—afraid of her own decisions, afraid of the present, afraid of the future. When the minister visited his colleague's wife, she related how she was in the viselike grip of fear—so tyrannized that most of her time was spent in bed. She was so terrified that she became bedridden.

When the minister saw her two years later, he was pleasantly surprised to find a poised, serene woman,

working as a receptionist in an insurance office. When the pastor asked her to explain her amazing recovery, the woman replied, "The work helped, of course, but I couldn't work at all until I faced my fear and saw it was basically a selfish rebellion against God and what I thought was God's will. When I saw that, I began to pray that God would forgive my selfishness. And as I prayed, I became aware of God's hand reaching down to me, and the Holy Spirit moved me to clasp that hand. And then to my amazement, I found His hand clasping mine; and I knew that He really cared and that He would help me as long as I held His hand in faith."

Is your faith like that woman's? What burden or fear besets you today? Do you feel God's hand clasping yours?[13]

Illustrations are certainly to be shunned if they (a.) do not flow from the text; (b.) are remote from the hearer's world; (c.) are apocryphal; (d.) are sidetracking or lacking closure; (e.) are boringly analogical—being only a comparison of sorts; and therefore (f.) are lacking a denouement. But the preacher who eschews illustrations is ignoring our Lord's own method: "He would not say a thing to them without using a story" (Matthew 13:34).

Jesus particularly used story-illustrations. And they were drawn from the real life of His hearers. He followed the principle of beginning with the "known" in the lives of people (a wedding, a robbery, a death) and then moving to the "unknown"—the theological principle, the new truth to be learned. He communicated because "He knew His own and His own knew Him" (John 10:14).

Some preachers have a way of "starting with the unknown and ending up with the unknown." Jesus' method was different. "Consider the lilies how they grow" (Luke 12:27). And the listener mentally responded: "Yes, Lord, I was just digging around my plants this morning!" "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when robbers attacked him. . ." (Luke 10:30). And again the hearer responded: "Yes, Lord, I know just what You are talking about! Why, Uncle Daniel was attacked on that road just last week!"[14]

Christ used illustrative material drawn from the contemporary world of His hearers. The Apostle Paul did also, quoting

the secular literature of his day: "as your poets have said. . ." (Acts 17:28). But Christ also utilized the rich treasury of biblical illustrations as well. Such use does not mean just another rehash of a Bible story which people already know well. Rather it means the fresh application of stories and images from the Scriptures themselves.

R.R. Caemmerer has provided a rich resource of these metaphors which he calls the "Modes of the Atonement." They should be kept in mind by the preacher in depicting corollary scriptural material germane to the text for the day. And the themes may well trigger use of other biblical images and illustrative material besides stereotypical law-gospel and judgment-mercy language.[15] Caemmerer's list follows:[16]

Biblical Modes of Depicting the Atonement

Each complex of Law and Gospel is set on one line. Where Law complexes are repeated, the previous line is indicated by its numeral.

Man's Problem (Law)	*God's Answer (Gospel)*
Effecting a Change in the Relation of Man to God	
1. Separation from God, Isaiah 59:2; 53:6	Atonement, Romans 5:11 (KJV)
2. Hostility toward God	Reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:18 ff.
3. Wrath of God, Ephesians 5:6	Peace, John 16:33; Healing, Isaiah 53:5; Mercy
4. Death, Romans 6:23; Genesis 2:17	Life, Romans 6:23; John 3:1-16
5. Sin: rebellion, disobedience, Titus 3:3	Kingdom, Spirit, Matthew 4:17; 2 Corinthians 3:17
6. Sin: guilt under judgment, Psalm 130	Forgiveness (like 3); Romans 3:19 ff.
7. Sin: debt, Matthew 6:12	Redemption (like 26)
8. Sorrow (due to sin), 2 Corinthians 7:10	Joy, John 16:20
9. Disquiet (due to unfaith), Psalm 42:5	Hope, faith, Hebrew 12:1 ff.
10. Darkness (life away from God)	Light, Luke 1:79; John 3:19; 12:35
11. Unrighteousness, Romans 1:18	Righteousness of God, Jeremiah 23:6; Romans 3:19 ff.

12. Self-righteousness, Luke 18:9 ff.	Righteousness of God, Jeremiah 23:6; Romans 3:19 ff.
13. Filth of sinful nature, Romans 1:21 ff.	Cleansing, John 1:29; Psalm 51
The One through Whom God Effects the Change	
14. 1-13	The Anointed One, Psalm 2:2; Matthew 16:16
15. 1-13	The Servant, Isaiah 53:13 ff.; Philippians 2:5-8
16. 3-7, enormity, helplessness	The Sacrifice; Lamb, John 1:29; Hebrews 10:12
17. 3-7, enormity, helplessness	The Priest, Hebrews 4:15; 5; 7; 8; 9:24-28
18. 3, 6, 13; 1, 10	The Mercy Seat, Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:1
19. Malice, wickedness, insincerity, 1 Corinthians 5	The Passover, 1 Corinthians 5:7
20. Ignorance of God, John 1:18	The Word, John 1:1-14
21. Temptation, 1, 9, 6, 7	The Intercessor, Paraclete, 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:34
22. Waywardness, 1, 5, 9, 10	The Shepherd, Ezekiel 34:23; John 10:2 ff., etc.
23. 1, 4, man's total plight	Jesus, Savior, Matthew 1:21
24. 1, 2, 9, 10	Immanuel, Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23
The Act by Which God Enables the Change	
25. 6, 11	Christ's undergoing the indictment of the Law, Galatians 4:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21
26. Bondage, 4-8; Law	Christ's ransom through death, Matthew 20:28
27. 1-7	Christ's death on the cross, Colossians 1:22
28. 26	Christ's death and resurrection: victory, 1 Corinthians 15:57
29. Enormity of the wrath of God, 3	Christ's going to the Father (cross), John 14:2

The Message Which Communicates the Change to Men

30. 1, 2	The Word of Reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:18 ff.
31. 1-13	The Preaching of the Cross, 1 Corinthians 1:18
32. 4-12	The Gospel of Christ, to convert, 1 Peter 1:23
33. Continuing damage of sin, Romans 7:18 ff.	The Gospel of Christ, to build, 1 Peter 2:2
34. 4, 12	Baptism, Titus 3:4-7; Romans 6:4
35. 6, 9	Holy Communion, 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

Secondly, our Lord used inductive questions. In induction, upon observing the facts, the person is led to draw conclusions by inference, to arrive at a general principle. Deduction begins with a general truth and then seeks to apply it. Jesus said: "Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" And the man said: "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said: "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:36-37).

To avoid generic preaching one needs to apply the text to the hearer's personal life with inductive questions—as Jesus did. Otherwise, as spectator, I hear the pastor preach *about* the text (or generic "other people") but not *to* me. Such preaching does not involve me in the law in this text applied to my sinful nature. It does not call me personally to repentance *to* (not "and") the forgiveness of sins. (Luke 24:46-48 states the *sine qua non* of every biblical sermon.)[17] The preacher does not apply the good news of the gospel to me personally unless he uses inductive questions. He must query me and make me say, "Oops! Ugh!"—and then—"Aha! Yeah! Whee!" The result is true "law and gospel preaching" (as opposed to mere assertions: "we all are sinners," "we all need God's grace," etc.).[18]

Not long ago I heard a "sermon." For eighteen minutes the preacher vapidly talked about the "fact" that "you are a child of God." He told me nothing new. There was not a fresh thought in the message. His feeble attempts at what he probably thought were "illustrations" were pneumatic snippets: "I happened to be reading *Time* the other day. . ." "I

was driving to the hospital to make my calls when it suddenly occurred to me. . ." "I was on an airplane and happened to talk to. . ." There had obviously been no real preparation,[19] no search for well-honed story-illustrations, no in-depth study of either the text or contemporary life in relation to it—and no inductive questions which pulled me into the law and gospel in the text as it applied to me.

I went home not only unfed, but also angry. Why do our people put up with such things? Some simply come to church—knowing they will hear another innocuous sermon—because they would feel guilty if they did not come. Some come not minding innocuity, preferring it to a sermon which would really call them to repentance. Some are there because, though the pastor is not a good preacher, he may be a good counselor or caller. Perhaps he is simply likeable. Perhaps he helped someone through a serious illness—one's own or that of a loved one. But good, non-generic preaching could add so much more to that man's ministry (to put it mildly).

Inductive questions applied to the listener's life can obviate the bane of generic preaching. These two examples come from an Easter sermon:

[Part of the Introduction]

> Do you live your life as if you are still in the pre-Easter gloom? Is your vision of life so low that you shuffle through life only marking time in the here and now? Does life consist in what you accumulate? Is your love only self-love for "me and mine"? Is there no anger at what is and no yearning for what should be and shall be? Have you simply made your peace with the world and joined it? Are you living without the vision of the kingdom and apart, in any meaningful way, from the King? Are you living as though Jesus did not rise from the dead to give you a living hope? Then before the Easter message can be heard, you need to go to the tomb today and pray with the psalmist, "If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3).

[The Conclusion]

> Now let the lights come on in your life, and live in the light! Now let the cross be unveiled, for it is a glorious cross of forgiveness! Now let the banners be raised in your

> life of faith! Now let the lilies of joy trumpet the sound of praise to God: He is risen! Hallelujah! Hope is renewed forever and ever![20]

Thirdly, the use of richer imagery and fresher language is needed to make otherwise sedative words come to life. H. Grady Davis makes this observation:

> It is not enough to speak the truth. Though your words may be as true as the Bible, yet if they are not relevant to the life of your people, and if your voice fails to give them the accent of personal concern, they will still fall unheeded.[21]

The preacher must take Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* down from his shelf and keep it open as he writes. Also useful are the new computer aids *Illusaurus* and *The Pastor's Autoillustrator.* Here are several examples of generic *versus* specific language:

Generic	*Specific*
God guides me through life.	It is the "crazy, holy grace of God" which leads me (Frederick Buechner).
God loves you.	The challenge is to know "a God madly in love with us, and then live as one must who is caught up in such a love affair" (Andrew Greeley).
We should love another.	Our parish should have "an atmosphere in which grace flourishes" (Randolph Crump Miller).
	"Even though they are Lutherans, they love each other" (Edward W. Wessling *re* his parishioners).
The theology of most television "evangelists" is faulty.	What we need is a new magazine called *Repenthouse.*
Are you searching for God? Are you a complainer? Do you just follow the crowd? Do you know Jesus?	"Are you a groper, a griper, a grouper, or a gripper?" (Edward W. Wessling).

The traffic is bad.	Welcome to "California, where the state flower is the Concrete Cloverleaf" (Edward W. Wessling).
We should learn better how to communicate with each other.	Our dialogue should not be "the construction of agreed-upon barricades from behind which" we "hurl" our "own ego-gratifying ammunition, but rather, a table spread for an event of Christian love" (Harry A. DeWire).[22]
The sea was beautiful.	"The framing sea often seems to be of hand-hammered silver" (Margot Patterson Doss *re* Stinson Beach, California).

The Creative Task: Writing the Sermon by H. Gerard Knoche is a particularly helpful resource in the development of writing skills.[23] Sadly, the book is out of print. But it is worth tracking down in a library. It is loaded with fresh aids both for the sermon and for creativity of expression. Among many exciting illustrations of fecund description, it includes these from H. Grady Davis:[24]

Abstract	*Sensuous*
The alarm. . .	The roar of the siren. . .
He criticized them severely.	He blistered them with words (Fulton Sheen).
We avoid thinking of death.	We disguise death with flowers (Peter Marshall).
Young people enjoy life.	Life is sweet on the tongue of youth.
The spot where Jesus lay. . .	The cold stone slab. . . (Marshall).
The odors in Jesus' tomb. . .	Strange scents of linen and bandages, and spices, and close air and blood. . . (Marshall).

There are many additional books available to help one move beyond a generic literary style.[25] Among them is Francis C. Rossow's *Preaching the Creative Gospel Creatively.*[26] Rossow offers a variety of challenging approaches with respect to the gospel's "magic, music, rhythm, beauty, precision and dynamite":[27] multiple texts, literature, extended analogy, role playing, dialogue, letter format, inversion, cliché redemption, word study, grammar, logic, and mathematics.

In sum, one *can* enrich one's preaching style. The potential is there, ready to be untapped, aided by a variety of resources which are available. Many a preacher has found himself to be very like the man in prison for twenty years who one day tried the door of his cell and found it was unlocked.

I pray, then, that God may preserve us from today's plague of generic preaching, preaching which is lifeless and lethally dull, which uses the same God-talk every Sunday and which the preacher seeks to justify as "biblical" or "law and gospel" preaching. We need law and gospel preaching, but stated in fresh, contemporary language and illustrated in terms of real life—as Jesus did. "He would not say a thing to them without using a story" (Matthew 13:34). We must have done with the plague of generic preaching. Then the Lord will not have to look down on yet another Sunday morning when thousands of His people sit dazed, mummified, awash in bland theological jargon. And the Lord will not have to cry out, "Let my people go!"

ENDNOTES

1. Walter J. Burkhardt, "Saturday Night Live, Sunday Morning Deadly?" *Homiletic*, Winter 1989. God is not boring, but much preaching about Him is.

2. *The Cresset*, September 1961, p. 19. The quotation occurred in an introduction to a review of a book by Edward W. Wessling, *What's the Good Word?* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961) concerning which the reviewer went on to say: "Pastor Wessling is one of the breed of youngish pastors who think that preachers should speak a language understood by the people. His style is colloquial, his illustrations are drawn from the life

of people living in the middle of the twentieth century, and he does not eschew the use of humor when it can be used to advantage. His purpose in this inexpensive little paperback is to rescue some of the great old words of the faith from the process of corrosion which has all but destroyed some of them and to put them back to work as symbols and vehicles of the truth."

3. "Journalistic Preaching," *The Christian Century*, November 5, 1958.

4. The paragraphs quoted are used by permission. The final couplet is the refrain of Hymn 311 in *Lutheran Worship*, ed. the Commission on Worship of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982).

5. Wallace E. Fisher, *Who Dares to Preach?* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979), p. 143.

6. By "problem-resolution preaching" I do not mean "get-your-problems-solved-here" or "easy-answer" theology. I mean "attention-challenge-resolution" in the fullest sense of law and gospel.

7. Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), p. 25.

8. Donald L. Deffner, "Myths about Preaching," unpublished manuscript.

9. Nor need we weekly recount the whole history of salvation — and pound the Bible as we do it—just to prove we are "orthodox."

10. Richard G. Kapfer, in *Lent: A Time for Renewal*, ed. Gerhard Aho, Donald L. Deffner, and Richard G. Kapfer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1990). The quotation reprinted here is used by permission.

11. W.A. Poovey, *Letting the Word Come Alive: Choosing and Studying the Text* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), p. 24.

12. Donald L. Deffner, in *Lent: A Time for Renewal.* The quotation reprinted here is used by permission.

13. Donald L. Deffner, in *Sermon Illustrations for the Gospel Lessons* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1980), p. 25. The quotation reprinted here is used by permission.

14. Donald L. Deffner, *Compassionate Preaching: A Primer/Primer in Homiletics* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1990).

15. For additional sources of illustrations correlated to biblical texts and themes see Richard Andersen and Donald L. Deffner, *For Example: Illustrations for Contemporary Preaching* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977). Particularly worthy of note is use of secular literature as a resource. See also David F. Burgess, *Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1988). See also *Context,* a commentary on the intersection of religion and culture, a six-page fortnightly newsletter by Martin E. Marty culled from 250 periodicals. *Time* calls Marty "the most influential living interpreter of religion in the United States" (twenty-two issues cost $24.95).

16. Richard R. Caemmerer, *Preaching for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), pp. 330-331. The list reprinted here with minor adaptations (purely orthographical and grammatical) is used by permission.

17. The prophets' message, John the Baptist's call, and our Lord's ultimate, climactic words to His disciples were "the message about repentance to the forgiveness of sins. . ." This message "must be preached to all nations. . ." Significantly, "repentance to" (*eis*) is the preferable reading, not "repentance and." The preaching of the law serves the conviction of sin and so (indirectly) the reception of the good news of the gospel. This repentance is also the message essential to Paul's declaration of the gospel in 1 and 2 Corinthians and is the central core in the Book of Acts. Repentance to the forgiveness of sins is always the heart of the declaration—and it is linked to the resurrection.

    Of course, the life of sanctification follows. In this connection see the article by David P. Scaer, "Sanctification in Lutheran Theology," *Concordia Theological Quarterly,* 49 (April-July, 1985). With respect to sanctification, preaching repentance to the forgiveness of sins also avoids the trap of moralism. Moralism focuses on certain values as ideals to follow, rather than seeing them as consequences of the gospel.

    But we do not "work on" traits of Christian character. And Christ is not just "our example." He is rather prototype. He is the first fruits of those who believe in Him. Therefore we focus not on His humility, as a precept to follow, but on His humiliation—His sacrifice for us. For we fail totally, but by virtue of His death and resurrection we are forgiven and then called to the fruits of faith, empowered totally by the Holy Spirit. Christ is now in me, and I am "in Christ." Paul uses the phrase some thirty-two times in the New Testament (cf. also Galatians 5 and 6).

18. The preacher must also avoid weak words: "I think sometimes we. . ."; "perhaps"; "maybe"; "it seems to me"; "I think what Paul is trying to say here is. . ." "Throw-away" sentences (those which are superfluous or repetitive) should also be deleted.

19. I am convinced that much generic preaching arises from this, that the sermon was never fully written. Nor did the preacher take the time to develop a "single, clear idea." As John Henry Jowett said many years ago: "No sermon is ready for preaching, nor ready for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as crystal. I find the getting of that sentence the hardest, the most exacting, and the most fruitful labor in my study. . .I do not think any sermon ought to be preached or even written, until that sentence has emerged, clear and lucid as a cloudless moon." (John Henry Jowett, *The Preacher, His Life and Work* (New York: Doran, 1912), p. 133.

20. Richard G. Kapfer. The adaptation of his introduction and the quotation of his conclusion (op. cit.) are used by permission.

21. H. Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958).

22. Harry A. DeWire, *The Christian as Communicator* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), p. 97, as quoted in "Establishing a Trust-Relationship with the Educated" in Donald L. Deffner, *The Compassionate Mind: Evangelization and the Educated* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1988), p. 180 (a work now being published by Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis).

23. H. Gerard Knoche, *The Creative Task: Writing the Sermon* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977).

24. Davis, op. cit., pp. 271-272.

25. A widely heralded "little classic" is William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style* (New York: Macmillan, 1979).

26. Francis C. Rossow, *Preaching the Creative Gospel Creatively* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1983). Rossow's unique forte is "Gospel-Handles," which he defines as "the selection from a biblical sermon text of a word (or words) which in itself contains no Gospel but which is used as an approach, transition, or handle to an account of the Gospel outside the text" (p. 50). This approach provides crucial help to those preachers who fail to preach the gospel consistently on such grounds as these: (1.) it is not present in the text of the day; (2.) it is still always present in the liturgy; (3.) they have heard it before. Rossow's goals in using "Gospel-Handles" are (1.) to get to the gospel when the

sermon text itself contains little or no gospel, (2.) to provide an alternate approach to the gospel in an overly familiar text, and (3.) to provide within the same sermon "extra" gospel in addition to that explicitly supplied by the text (p. 51).

27. Ibid., p. 154.

Theological Observer

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS AND THE PILGRIMAGE TO ROME

When Richard John Neuhaus reaches the age of seventy, he will have divided his ministerial career into three almost evenly divided parts: the LCMS, the AELC and ELCA, and the Church of Rome. Having been brought up in Canada in the home of a Missouri Synod pastor, his Lutheran years will predominate, but his final religious disposition as a Roman Catholic is determinative. Conversions between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism are not unusual. Two alumni of this institution have recently switched to Rome. With no relaxation of the celibacy rule in sight, many former priests have switched to Protestant denominations, including ours. A clergyman moving from one church to another is often motivated by what he sees as an intolerable or hopeless situation in the church which he is leaving, rather than being drawn to a new church home by its claims to absolute truth. This seems to be the case with Neuhaus. It seems improbable that a man of Neuhaus's intellectual capacity would surrender freedom of thought to Rome. It was not so much a matter of joining Rome as it was a matter of leaving ELCA, whose forms, he felt, were stifling historic Christianity.

The item would scarcely be newsworthy were it not that, excepting Martin Marty of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Neuhaus has more name recognition than any other Lutheran theologian. Marty's fame has been built on the popularization of a general Protestantism. Neuhaus, in the style of Erasmus, was tilting with the leaders of the churches of which he was a member. Unlike the Dutch humanist, Neuhaus was serious. Erasmus stayed where he was. Neuhaus did not. In spite of the generous farewells from his former superiors, they may be breathing a little easier at his departure. The adjectives applied by Neuhaus to Missouri in the sixties and seventies have been forgetten, but his *Forum Letter* was to the end peppered with such words as "apostate" and "schismatic" in describing the newly formed Lutheran church. The words "nearly" and "almost" did little to sweeten his biting critique. His detractors in the LCMS, still fighting ancient battles, seemed oblivious to his critical posture towards the reigning authorities of ELCA. His *Forum Letter* turned "Higgins Road," the street address of the ELCA national headquarters near O'Hare Field, into a synonym for church bureaucracy. His message was clear: Higgins Road had *de*theologized the church body with a system of quotas strangely similar to the federal government's. Ecclesiastical affirmative action kept the newly mitred bishops in the bleachers. While ELCA was promised as the dawn of a Lutheran millennium, Neuhaus adopted the posture of a John the Baptist proclaiming that the church was in the Protestant desert.

Neuhaus has never concealed his attraction to Rome, which may have been as much for aesthetic reasons as for theological. A constant detectable theme in his writing was that the Lutheran Church was inadequately expressing Lutheran theology, which he for years understood as an expression of the *catholic* faith. He may not be the originator of the concept of Lutheranism as "a confessing movement within the catholic church," but he did popularize it. Missouri failed him by not allowing its members participation in the wider church. Its narrow fellowship practices, especially in regard to the Holy Communion, were too confining for one who saw the church and society in global terms. ELCA failed him in looking to him less like a church than a corporation enthusiastically complying with government regulations. If the early seventies could have been frozen in time, he might have found that Missouri allowed him the space he craved. Paradoxically the present Roman pontiff is closing some of the windows which Vatican II opened. It is questionable whether this twentieth-century council is the answer to the Lutheran concerns of the sixteenth century, as Neuhaus contends.

His joining the Church of Rome is more a transition than a real conversion. The ecclesiastical entities called churches changed, but he did not change, as he saw it. The Church of Rome expresses for him true Christianity, or at least it comes closer than modern Lutheranism. In Rome he finds an expression of the historical catholic truth which he could not find in organized Lutheranism. It appears that this problem haunted him since seminary days. At age fifty-four he gave into his long-term desires.

His move to Rome, as personally traumatic as it may have been for him, has wider repercussions. His mother, eighty-eight years old and the widow of a Lutheran pastor, is still vigorous enough to exercise her inherent maternal rights to voice opposition. He was aware that his turning to Rome could be interpreted as betraying or distressing the Lutherans whose communion he shared. For good or evil he rendered a judgment. He shook the dust from his feet. He surrendered his rights to walk again on Lutheran soil. It was like a grand excommunication. Lutherans have been placed under the ban. This has to be the understanding of the members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, on Lexington Avenue and Eighty-Eighth Street in New York City, a one time LCMS citadel now fallen into ELCA hands, where as a pastoral assistant, Neuhaus often occupied the pulpit, delivering sermons, it has been reported, with the firmest of Lutheran convictions. These people must face the question whether theirs is a true church or a church in any sense at all.

His decision to receive ordination from a Roman bishop can hardly be less than devastating to these parishioners and those who were his fellow pastors. This ordination suggests that his ministerial acts

and, by implication, theirs—especially the sacramental ones—may have been invalid or in some sense less than what they should have been. Should the reply be that this ordination is occurring only because it is necessary to membership in the organization which calls itself the Church of Rome, then Neuhaus has submitted to the very administrative tyranny against which he inveighed so eloquently for so long. His mentor, Arthur Carl Piepkorn, suggested a conditional baptism in cases where it was uncertain whether a valid one had been administered previously. Consistency would require that a conditional ordination be conferred on Neuhaus. He was one of several ELCA pastors who were attempting to awaken a dying Lutheran consciousness. *Forum Letter* and *Lutheran Forum* were their standards. His wide recognition in church and society gave that voice a bit more authority. Neither publication will be the same without him. For others the one who troubled Israel is gone, but no one could trouble Israel with so much wit.

Neuhaus has already produced enough articles and books to allow his theology to be analyzed and scrutinized in academic dissertations. Harping on his alleged liberalism is hardly appropriate to a man who was a guest of President Ronald Reagan in the White House and of William F. Buckley on *Firing Line* and has served as a contributing editor of *National Review*. Unlike those unequal to him in intellect, he made no use of an honorary doctorate awarded by a Roman Catholic institution in Connecticut and another by Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. His flirting with Rome did not prevent the Evangelicals (that is, the Neo-Fundamentalists) from seeing him as a fellow traveler. Religion belonged in *The Naked Public Square* and the Evangelicals were happy to help him put it there.

The Catholic Moment came closer to revealing what Neuhaus understood as ideal. The Roman Church, which has never entirely separated itself from its medieval roots, is not encumbered with Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms. ELCA has an agenda for society but it is hardly different from the socialistic manifestos of the mainline Protestant denominations. Evangelicals have rushed in to fill the political void, but the lack of a doctrine of the church eliminated this option for Neuhaus. Rome has tradition and continuity and thus commitment, dependability, and an institution which transcends centuries and continents. Where splintered Evangelicals can never speak a final word, the Roman magisterium can and often does. The ELCA attempt at historical respectability with its version of an episcopacy did not satisfy him, at least not in the sense which Rome finally did. Calling church leaders bishops did not necessarily make them so. The thought of ELCA bishops sharing in the apostolic succession through consecration by Anglican bishops did not tempt him to stay. It was to him either fraudulent or, if

genuine, not worth the wait. The historic episcopacy has not prevented the Anglican Communion from denials of the historic faith, as his periodicals have pointed out. The Eastern Orthodox communion (Greek, Russian, Antiochian) has historical claims equal to Rome; but, never having confronted the Reformation or the Enlightenment, its intellectual life is insufficiently developed for Neuhaus. Pannenberg, influenced by Hegel, is a favorite of his. The Eastern Church, like Missouri, would have been too confining for him. Rome, with its claim to historic orthodoxy and an umbrella wide enough for different theologies, was the natural and only option. Since Cardinal O'Connor, the Archbishop of New York, is allowing him to stay with his Institute for Religion and Public Life, he may have found just the mixture of historical tradition and freedom of thought for which he was looking. ELCA gave him the freedom but, without the historical tradition, it was less of a church than he demanded.

The parallel between Neuhaus and John Cardinal Newman, a leader of the Oxford Movement in the Church of England in the nineteenth century, cannot be avoided, even by Neuhaus himself. Each saw the *catholic* element in his own tradition, whether the Augsburg Confession or the Thirty-Nine Articles, as fundamental to his denominational faith. Not finding it to the desired extent, each left for Rome. Newman's Rome may have been his own romanticized vision of it and, for this reason, he was honored with a cardinal's hat but no real position of authority. Reformers, even those who would reform Protestantism with Catholicism, if placed at the helm, would likely sail the church into unfamiliar waters.

The most troubling issue in Neuhaus's theology is his unwillingness to reject universalism (the teaching that salvation without Christ is possible) with clarity. He comes to this position more from an extreme stress on divine grace than from a denial of human depravity. His role as a social critic on such moral issues as abortion indicates the seriousness of sin for him. But his role as a preacher to society may account for his universalism. To further public morality Neuhaus has had to work in a context involving Jewish leaders. Within this context it becomes difficult to accept another's moral companionship in this world and then refuse it to him in the next. Making this observation is not to sit in judgment on Neuhaus, but to provide an explanation of what is for many (but not for him) a discrepancy between his turn to Rome and his universalism. In any event his new superiors could not have been unaware of his position. Neuhaus's concept of the church's involvement in society is not simply a revival of a medieval pattern, with its alignment of pope and king, but is philosophically informed by Pannenberg, who does not see a sharp division between ordinary history and salvation history. God's activity in Israel, Christ, and the church is not qualitatively

different from what He has done in the rest of world history. Every thing, person, or event has revelatory significance—a position similar to Tillich's. The distinction between general and special revelation is lost, and the final consummation in glory must be universal. Neuhaus's newly launched periodical, *First Things First*, reflects this attitude by placing societal and theological issues, both Jewish and Christian, on the same plane. For lack of a better term, I once suggested to him "secular ecumenism" as describing this position. The Niebuhr brothers were taking just this position in the first part of this century.

Time will judge whether Neuhaus will have the freedom which ELCA membership allowed him to head the Institute of Religion and Public Life and to travel, lecture, and write at will. It seems unlikely that he will tweak the noses of Rome's bishops as he did those in the more tolerant ELCA. His transition to Rome makes any critique of his former brothers in the household of faith less effective. This development is unfortunate, because the church will never come to that time of perfection when its kings and bishops need no critics. Neuhaus's blend of theology and humanism suggests not a Luther, nor an Elijah, but rather an Erasmus. Not a gadfly, but rather an annoying mosquito, Neuhaus made life uncomfortable for those entrenched in positions of authority. They will not miss him. He stung like a wasp, but his sting was never mortal.

More than thirty years have elapsed since Neuhaus first admonished me for using the word "catholic" to describe the Roman Church. The standard lecture given us who have committed this transgression is that catholicism is more than Rome and is, above all, Lutheranism. I never took this admonition to heart, believing that Catholics are Catholics and Lutherans are Lutherans and that there is no need to confuse people. The Athanasian Creed presents enough problems on Trinity Sunday without the confusion which the reference to "the catholic faith" creates in most minds. Now I have become a convert. The headline in the *New York Times* should not have read "Citing Luther, a Noted Theologian Leaves Lutheran Church for Catholicism." It should have said that he left "for Rome." At the conclusion of the doctrinal articles in the Augsburg Confession appears this statement: "This is the sum of our teaching. As can be seen, there is nothing here that departs from the scriptures or the catholic church or the church of Rome, in so far as the ancient church is known to us from its writers" (*The Book of Concord*, ed. Theodore G. Tappert [Fortress Press], p. 47). Neuhaus is right in insisting that any church organization, including the Lutheran Church, be judged by how that organization gives expression to the more fundamental principle of that church which has been redeemed by Christ and sanctified by the Spirit and which, in all of its members, believes the truth. A church

which truly holds to the Augsburg Confession is the church which best fits this description. Traditional Rome, with its adherence to the sacraments and ancient creeds, was orthodox in a sense that the Lutherans could not allow to their Reformed opponents. By this standard Neuhaus has now found ELCA wanting and has joined post-Reformation Rome. Still he is neither so naive nor such a purist as to expect that any church, including Rome, can fit his standards all the time and in all its parishes. Indeed, if he applies, with the same rigor, the standards to Rome that he applied to the Lutheran Church, Neuhaus may discover that he has exchanged one set of problems for another—and perhaps a more difficult set.

David P. Scaer

AN INTERPRETATION

The following sentences are quoted from the official memorandum of the Reconciliation Committee appointed to deal with a case involving Dr. Waldo J. Werning and Dr. David P. Scaer: "Dr. Werning had charged that the last sentence of Dr. Scaer's essay 'Sanctification in Lutheran Theology' (*CTQ*, April-July, 1985, p. 194) was inadequate because 'it is an exclusive statement which excludes the Father and the Holy Spirit as part of theology.' At the suggestion of the committee Dr. Scaer offered to provide an emended interpretation, or change in wording, to read: 'Any attempt to make christology preliminary to theology, or even its most important part, but not its primary, central core in the light of which all articles of faith are interpreted, is a denial of Luther's doctrine and effectively destroys the Gospel as the message of a completed atonement.' (The underlined words replace '. . .its only part. . .') Dr. Werning approved of this change in wording, satisfied that no exclusion of the Trinity was intended or suggested in the original wording. In a spirit of collegiality Dr. Scaer agreed that notice of this change would appear in an upcoming issue of the *CTQ*."

The Editors

THE SYMPOSIUM ON EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY

This January 22 and 23 have been designated as the days on which the Sixth Annual Symposium on Exegetical Theology will take place under the auspices of the Department of Exegetical Theology of Concordia Theological Seminary. The topic to be explored from various angles is the "Order of Creation," a nexus of biblical concepts which relates to many questions currently controversial in society and in the church. The schedule of the conference is printed, with those of the accompanying confessional and liturgical symposia, at the beginning of this issue of the *CTQ*.

The Symposium on Exegetical Theology began rather spontaneously in January of 1985 as an appendix—or, chronologically

speaking, a prefix—to the well-established Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions (now in its fourteenth year). Dr. James Voelz (then an associate professor of New Testament in Concordia Theological Seminary) and Dr. David Scaer (then serving as academic dean) are to be remembered as especially vocal in urging the sponsorship of this symposium upon the department of exegetical theology. Interest in the conference both inside and, more importantly, outside the seminary quickly became apparent. As the attendance increased, so did the number of offerings, including papers by scholars of note from other institutions (whether orthodox or heterodox by Lutheran standards).

Last year (1990) the symposium had attained to sufficient maturity to cut its maternal apron strings. That is to say, a central theme was chosen which did not depend on the topic to be addressed by the Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions. Thus, the Fifth Annual Symposium on Exegetical Theology was dedicated to the "First-Century Milieu of the New Testament." The renowned British scholar C.S. Mann delivered two lectures—one beginning and one concluding the conference: "The Economics of First-Century Scroll and Codex Production" and "Some Thoughts on the Early Christians and Roman Civil Law." James Voelz (now associate professor of New Testament Exegesis in Concordia Seminary, St. Louis) addressed questions relating to the "Linguistic Milieu of the New Testament." The following papers were provided by members of the seminary faculty here: "Eschatology in the Qumran Community: Reflections on the War Scroll" by Dean Wenthe, "The Jewish-Gentile Partition and Its Destruction—Ephesians 2" by Walter Maier, and "Enoch and the Bible" by Douglas Judisch. In this last entry the undersigned argued that the words of Jude 14b-15 had been handed down orally from prediluvian times and constituted the seed from which Enochian pseudepigrapha sprang in intertestamental times.

An occasion which deserves special mention was the lecture of Dr. Raymond F. Surburg: "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Text of the Old Testament." The essay demonstrated that the biblical texts of Qumran substantiate the Massoretic Text of the Old Testament, rather than requiring substitution or modification (as many have asserted). Dr. Surburg's colleagues in the department of exegetical theology had declared this occasion a special doctoral lecture and sat on the dais as he delivered it, all members of the department wearing the appropriate academic garb. This departmental action was a corollary of the action taken by the faculty as a whole on the preceding graduation day in honoring Dr. Surburg's thirty-five years of teaching in synodical institutions of higher education—including twenty-nine years in this seminary, first in Springfield and now in Fort Wayne. The faculty, with the concurrence of the Board of

Regents, took the highly unusual step of conferring an honorary doctorate on a man from its own ranks. To be sure, the man already possessed two earned doctorates (as well as two master's degrees). He had received the degree of Doctor of Theology from American Theological Seminary (Wilmington) in 1942 and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Fordham University (New York) in 1950. Nevertheless, the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary conferred upon him in 1989 the degree of Doctor of Divinity *honoris causa*.

This unique action was justified by the unique contribution made by Raymond Surburg to the theological welfare of his seminary and his synod as a whole. During the years of the liberal-conservative controversy he rendered his church signal service in lectures and writings defending the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible and refuting the claims of higher criticism. Indeed, in the specific area of Old Testament studies, Dr. Surburg was the primary advocate of the biblical-confessional views traditional in the LCMS—the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the eighth-century unity of Isaiah, the sixth-century provenance of Daniel, the centrality of messianic prophecy, the historicity of the creation and fall, the fifteenth-century occurrence of the exodus, and the like. By virtue of his theological consistency and literary productivity Dr. Surburg emerged as the leading Old Testament exegete of the Missouri Synod and, indeed, of confessional Lutheranism throughout the world. It is especially appropriate here to note the numerous articles and book reviews which he has contributed to the *Springfielder* and subsequently the *Concordia Theological Quarterly* during the past two and a half decades. For fifteen years he served on the editorial board of this journal—with specific responsibilities as book review editor.

The citation which was read when Concordia Theological Seminary conferred the doctorate of divinity on Raymond Surburg was reread before he delivered his doctoral lecture to the Fifth Annual Symposium on Exegetical Theology. After noting his service in parishes in New Jersey and New York and on the faculty of Concordia Teachers College in Seward (Nebraska), this citation continued as follows: "He came to Concordia Theological Seminary in 1960. . .His literary work in one year equals the output of most of us in a lifetime. Since his retirement in 1982, he has continued with a full teaching-load in some terms and a nearly full teaching-load in other terms. His eye has not dimmed; his strength has not abated, nor has his desire to serve this school." As to his literary work, one might note that, although quite incomplete, a select bibliography of Dr. Surburg's writings appeared in this journal a decade ago, together with a special tribute to him by its editors (*CTQ*, 44:1 [January 1980], pp. 41-45).

Douglas McC. L. Judisch

Homiletical Studies

Epistle Series B

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

December 30, 1990

Colossians 3:12-17

Introduction: When I was a child, I reckoned that Santa Claus would be impressed if my behavior included certain virtues such as kindness (toward my brothers) and patience (toward my parents). I always felt distinctly relieved after Christmas, when I no longer had to work so hard to impress Santa! The list of virtues St. Paul includes in this epistle are not things we Christians do to impress God. Like children after Christmas, we now see a gift before our eyes. The virtuous behavior St. Paul expects of a Christian is rather the spontaneous response of love:

AFTER THE GIFT IS OURS

I. Before the gift, we did not deserve any rewards.
   A. Evil behavior and alienation from God characterized our lives (1:21).
      1. Our past sins are abundant (we note the conclusion of Paul's list of sins in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).
      2. Our "good works" are flawed also.
   B. Virtue and righteousness are not our achievement, but our need.
      1. We cannot take comfort in our past achievements nor impress God with a list of our virtuous actions.
      2. Our need for the gift of forgiveness is clear.

Transition: I can honestly say that God's Christmas gift to me is "just what I always needed." Thanks to God, we can discard the shabby rags of our sinful past and put on the brand new garment of righteousness which is His free gift of love to us.

II. The gift is available through Christ.
   A. God's word tells us Christ paid for our new garment of righteousness with His life (1:22).
   B. Through Christ we "take off the old. . ." and "put on the new self" (3:9-10; Romans 6:13-14).
      1. The new garment is a baptismal garment (Ephesians 5:26-27).
      2. The gift never grows old (2 Corinthians 4:16).

III. The gift has a tremendous after-effect on us.
  A. Clothed with the gift of Christ's righteousness we give thanks to God through our actions.
    1. The "new self" deals with others as it has been dealt with by a loving Father (verses 12-13).
    2. The "new self" takes part in the Body of Christ, the best environment for peace on earth (verse 15).
  B. The gift of God liberates us to offer ourselves in righteousness (Romans 6:19; 12:1).
    1. Everything we do in public and in private should be worship (verse 16; Romans 12:1).
    2. Everything that we do should be offered to God in response to His love for us (verse 17).

Conclusion: Like wide-eyed children under the Christmas tree, we see a great gift before us. After the gift is ours, we give thanks. Our thanks for such a gift properly includes "whatever we do in word or deed." No other thanks is adequate. Our thanks must correspond to the greatness of the gift and the greatness of the mercy of God.

Jonathan C. Naumann
Ruislip, England

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

January 6, 1991

Ephesians 3:2-12

Paul's overflowing and joyous excitement packs so much into the text that an analytical and verse-by-verse sermon outline would weary both preacher and congregation. We have at least four major topics from which to choose a point of emphasis appropriate to Epiphany:

1. God's Divine Economy (God's Church Extension)
2. God's Many-Sided Wisdom
3. The Privilege of the Pulpit
4. The Open Secret

A few textual notes apply regardless of the theme chosen. The Greek etymon of "economy" in verses 2 and 9 pictures, in the first instance, the management of a household. But derivative applications include administration, stewardship, dispensation, arrangement, regulation, divine office, and ordination. Paul's usage equates "administration of His grace" with "administration of the mystery." For us a

"mystery" may be a television "who-done-it," implying some knowledge withheld. English translations might do better to find a different rendering. For Paul, a "mystery" is not knowledge withheld, but rather truth revealed. The administration of grace or mystery is the denouement or proclamation of the great divine drama in Christ. For Paul, a "mystery" is an open secret—formerly veiled and now "epiphanied" in the Word become flesh.

The marvel is not only that the Lord accepts us Gentiles, but that He incorporates us into the Body of Christ. He commissions us as surely as He chose Paul. We cannot help breaking into doxology. Paul could not help disrupting his line of thought in Ephesians with a hymn of praise. Our commentators tell us that Ephesians 3:2-13 is parenthetical to Paul's theme of "Sit, Stand, Walk." *The New Testament: God's Word to the Nations* emphasizes the form with parenthesis and typesetting. In form, then, the text is an aside, but in content it is the theme, not only of this letter, but of Paul's ministry.

In verse 6 we have another example of Paul's struggle with human language. As in 2 Timothy 3:16, when Paul cannot find the right word, he coins a new one. He had a word for "joint-heirs" and a word for "joint-sharers." But "joint-body" is not only unique in the New Testament; it is not found anywhere in previous Greek literature.

Epiphany is the second part of an open secret. Part one is that the baby wrapped in strips of cloth, consigned to an animal's feedbox, hounded by Herod, fleeing, abused, mocked, rejected, nailed, and murdered is the risen and ascended Savior of His people. Part two defines *His* people as *all* people. Part two declares *us* equal in Christ before the Father. The angels (verse 10) are equally amazed at both parts.

Surely we share the wonder. The problem is that we are born blind. The open secret is not hidden, but we cannot see it when we wear the blindfolds of sin. The goal of the sermon suggested below is to move Christians to arise and shine (as the Old Testament reading from Isaiah 60 puts it) with light reflected from the Word become flesh. The power to achieve this goal is this same Word become flesh in Bethlehem—coming through His word to us here and now.

Introduction: Some secrets are not hidden for long; they are blabbered all over the place. Some secrets are not revealed for many years—only when no one involved can be hurt anymore. Some secrets are carried to the grave; dead men tell no tales. One secret was carried to the grave on Good Friday, but this secret now has risen in a joyous Epiphany explosion. Today we rejoice:

REJOICE IN GOD'S OPEN SECRET!

I. Rejoice that Jesus is God's open secret.
   A. One mystery of God's plan was revealed in Jesus.
   B. The second mystery of God's plan is revealed in you.
II. Rejoice that you proclaim God's open secret.
   A. You are commissioned to live in your joy in Jesus.
   B. You are commissioned to speak of your joy in Jesus.

Conclusion: The secret is out! We rejoice that the mystery of God's plan of salvation is no longer secret. We rejoice and then we tell everyone what He has done!

Warren E. Messmann
Fort Wayne, Indiana

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

January 13, 1991

Acts 10:34-38

Key points in this Epiphany text are that God accepts people from every nation (Gentiles included) and that Gentiles can be received directly into the church without first becoming "Jews" (adopting Jewish customs and rituals). The door of the church is open to all Gentiles. It is interesting to note that Cornelius already was a believer before Peter's arrival (cf. 10:2, 4, 22, 31, 34, 35). With the preaching of Peter Cornelius moves from being a believer in the Old Testament sense—believing in the Messiah to come (promised)—to being a believer in the New Testament sense—believing in the Messiah who has come (promise fulfilled). He moves into the Christian Church. Even before Peter came Cornelius knew much about Jesus; but Peter completes the story (cf. particularly verses 39-43 and the emphasis on Christ's resurrection) and assures Cornelius that what he has heard concerning Jesus is true (verse 39).

Verse 35 must be interpreted, of course, in the light of verse 43. The Greek of verses 36-38 is somewhat awkward; on this matter one may consult the commentaries. The sermon theme results from a literal translation of one phrase in verse 35: "acceptable to Him [God]."

Introduction: People like to be "accepted"—at home, at work, at school. Of greatest importance is our being accepted by God.

WHO IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD?

I. No one is by nature acceptable to God.
   A. All people are by nature sinful.
      1. All are sinful from the moment they are conceived.
      2. All have disobeyed God and have broken His commandments in thought, word, and deed.
   B. No sinner can make himself acceptable to God.
      1. We are unable to save ourselves, to make ourselves right with God.
      2. Left to ourselves, we are on the road to everlasting damnation in hell.

II. All those who have faith in Jesus Christ are acceptable to God.
   A. The good news is that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ (verse 36).
      1. Jesus is both God (verse 36) and man (verse 38).
      2. Jesus lived a perfect life (verses 37, 38) in our stead, paid fully for all our sins with His suffering and death on the cross, and arose from the dead.
      3. Through faith in Jesus we have forgiveness of all our sins (cf. verse 43), we receive the righteousness Christ has acquired for us, and we are acceptable to God. This faith is created and preserved in us by the Holy Spirit through the gospel.
   B. Believers fear God (verse 35).
      1. This fear of God is a product or fruit of faith.
      2. This fear of God is taught in both the Old and New Testaments.
      3. With the help of the Holy Spirit we keep on having a proper fear of the Lord.
   C. Believers do what is right (verse 35).
      1. This righteous living is also a fruit of faith; it is external evidence of an internal, genuine faith.
      2. Believers do "what is right" only with the help of God, and Christ's blood covers any imperfections in our works.
      3. We pray to the Lord to strengthen us through word and sacrament so that we may continue and grow in doing "what is right."

III. Those who are acceptable to God—believers—come from every nation (verse 35).
   A. God does not show favoritism (verse 34).
      1. God calls to faith and saves *both* Jews and Gentiles (verse 36).
      2. The Gentile Cornelius, a believer in the Old Testament sense—believing in the Messiah to come (promised)—had been acceptable to God. Through the preaching of Peter

he became a believer in the New Testament sense (believing in Jesus Christ who died and arose); Cornelius moved into the Christian Church.

B. Peter, in meeting Cornelius, realized that Gentiles could believe in, and thus be acceptable to, the true God (verses 34, 35).
   1. He realized that Gentiles could enter the Christian Church simply through faith in the risen Christ and baptism (verses 47, 48) without first becoming "Jews" (adopting Jewish customs and ceremonies).
   2. This realization paved the way for missionary work among the Gentiles.

C. We rejoice that God does not show favoritism, but calls people from every nation.
   1. This Epiphany season has special meaning for all Gentile believers.
   2. As the opportunities arise, we wish to share our faith with all who do not yet believe in Jesus.

Conclusion: Who is acceptable to God? You and I and all believers are! God has made us acceptable to Himself through Jesus Christ. We rejoice in our blessed status, and we dedicate ourselves anew to living God-pleasing lives, lives which show us to be among those who are acceptable to God.

Walter A. Maier III

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 20, 1991

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Introduction: The human body is the most remarkable of all the many things which God created. But the fall of man into sin brought a lamentable lot to this body. Furthermore, man by nature misuses his body. Many cultures have considered the body as something evil in itself. At Paul's time some Greeks were of this opinion. They abused and misused their bodies. This abuse is contrary to the will of God. Each person's body, except between death and judgement day, will last forever. Therefore, our text tells us:

GUARD THE SACREDNESS OF YOUR BODY

I. The essence of this sacredness.
   A. The body is a fruit of the Lord's work.

1. Not only has He created it; He has also redeemed all people, body and soul. Verse 20 tells us: "You have been bought for a price." That price is the incarnation, life, work, and death of the very Son of God. Faith in the promises of Jesus sanctifies the believer.
2. Jesus has made the body a part of Himself. Verse 15 reads: "You know, do you not, that your bodies are members of Christ?" And verse 17 says: "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him." This is said of the believing Christian. The union between Redeemer and redeemed is closer than any other relationship known to man. Even death does not dissolve it.
3. The body is Jesus' property. Verse 13b says: "The Lord is for the body." Why? It is His property. Verse 19b reads: "You are not your own." I am not free to abuse or misuse my body. Under God I am only the steward of my body and soul.

B. The body, with the soul, will last forever.
1. The Lord makes it His home now and forever. Verse 19 reads: "You know, do you not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who lives in you, which Spirit you have of God?" Our God is an everlasting God. And His habitation, like Him, is eternal.
2. He will raise the body from the dead. Our text tells us: "God both raised the Lord and will raise us through His power." The Greeks did not believe in the resurrection of the body. Many people today care nothing for this teaching. But this article of faith is basic to our salvation and everlasting life with God. Verily, my body is sacred to the Lord!
3. He will preserve the body without its appetites. Verse 13 reads: "Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy both it [the stomach] and them [all types of food]." This remarkable statement means that in everlasting life the body will no longer need and enjoy the physical appetites and activities which it experiences in this life. Sexual activity too will cease.

II. The dangers to this sacredness.

A. The constant bombardment of false teaching.
1. Many misunderstand Christian liberty. Verse 12 of the text reads: "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." Evidently the Corinthians argued that fornication was a part of Christian liberty. But Paul reminds them that he did not say such a thing. When some sin causes us to lose control of our bodies, we lose Christian liberty.

2. Many picture fornication as innocent and permissible. The text tells us: "The body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord." The Greeks did not consider it wrong for a man to go to a heathen temple and have intercourse with one of the temple priestesses. But it was sin, and fornication is still sin.

B. The practice of fornication.
1. It is a heinous sin. The text reads: "Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body." In God's sight there is a peculiar heinousness to fornication. It is very detrimental to the person who commits it.
2. It breaks the union with Christ. Verse 15 reads: "Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!" Why not? The text continues: "Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her?" Sexual intercourse in marriage does not disturb the individual's Christianity, but fornication breaks the relation to Christ.

Conclusion: The final verse of the text reads: "By all means, then, glorify God with your body." Single people must abstain from sexual activity, and married people must restrict themselves to each other. To glorify God means that people have a good opinion about God because of the sanctified lives which His children live. You have been redeemed to live with God forever. Guard the sacredness of your body.

Harold H. Buls

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 27, 1991

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

This text occurs in the course of Paul's answers to various questions posed by the church at Corinth. Paul senses that his readers may miss the point of his motives in giving advice as to marital relationships, and so he inserts a short explanation to reassure them that his admonitions proceed from love. Paul understands that the last times have arrived; the time is short, and he does not want the Corinthians to be caught unaware at the end. The glamour and glitz of a city like Corinth (or one's own home-town) is attractive. People become wrapped up in marriage, grief, rejoicing, and commercialization. They lose sight of the marriage of the church to her bridegroom, Jesus

Christ, who has bought her with a price and for whose coming she must be prepared. People lose sight of eternal joy in the midst of tears of temporal grief. They are numb to the grief of souls perishing around them in the midst of temporal happiness. They lose sight of the splendor of heavenly mansions in the benign glow of big screen entertainment and worldliness.

But the point is this: the time is short and we Christians must constantly focus our attention and energies on walking in the light of Him who is the true light. By the grace of God we are able to walk in the light of Him who is revealed in this Epiphany, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Introduction: In a television interview, a struggling father admits to working in two places for sixteen hours a day. He hardly sees the family for whom he endeavors to provide food and shelter. Tired, frustrated, and discouraged, he asks, "What is the point?" A mother who has just buried her sixteen-year-old, killed by a drunk driver, tearfully demands, "What is the point?" An extravagantly rich jet-setter pauses amidst his perpetual, yet somehow boring, playtime activities to inquire of no one in particular, "What is the point?" While paying the newly due bills from a lavish Christmas season, a disheartened mother reflects, "What is the point?"

WHAT IS THE POINT?

I. Paul was speaking to people who lived in one of the major trading centers of the ancient world. They were besieged by temptations not so very different from ours.
   A. The temptation to become overly engrossed with the family while neglecting Christian duties.
   B. The temptation to be overcome with grief.
   C. The temptation to be irresponsible in frivolity and rejoicing.
   D. The temptation to be consumed by an obsession with possessions.
   E. The temptation to be *of* the commercial world rather than only *in* it.

Transition: Paul was warning the Corinthians of some major sins and distractions which had crept into their worshipping community. As his admonition to Christian living was being read to the Corinthians, Paul could envisage someone raising the noisy question, "What is the point?"

II. In verses 29a and 31b, therefore, Paul explains what he means—in effect, here is the point.

A. The time is short; the present form will be changed at the parousia.
B. No one knows when the end is coming. Like the virgins, like the homeowner, Christians must be ready for Christ's great epiphany.

III. The point is that, because Jesus Christ loved His bride, the church, "and gave Himself up for her sake to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word," we too may live our lives, married or single, focused on the forgiveness which is ours.
A. Because Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb without losing sight of the resurrection which was to come, so too we may grieve the loss of our believing loved ones confident of a happy reunion in heaven.
B. Because Jesus rejoiced at the wedding at Cana, although His hour had not yet come, and resolutely faced His last hour for our sakes, we too may rejoice in this present time, looking ahead to an even greater feast at the wedding of the lamb.
C. Because Jesus never bought a house or owned property, but lived and died so that He could go to prepare the many rooms in His Father's mansion, we can own property and use it in God-pleasing ways to our benefit and to the glory of God.
D. Because God so loved the world that He sent His Son into the world, we are free to be *in* the world, without being *of* the world, as living witnesses to those around us.

Conclusion: The point is this: because Jesus paid the penalty for our sins of worldliness, we can be confident of our atonement, we can be focused on the hereafter, we can live lives *within* the world, yet not *of* the world, always ready for and expecting the end of this present form. God has made His point!

Gary L. Miller
Archbold, Ohio

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 3, 1991

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

We may disagree with G. Fee (in the *NICNT* commentary on 1 Corinthians) that Paul's sole issue here was Christian participation in pagan cultic meals (verse 10), but he rightly notes that in 10:14 and the following verses Paul absolutely forbids such activity while he

seems merely to advise against it in chapter 8. For here Paul just begins treating sacrificial food and sets forth his overall approach. So this text is more general than 1 Corinthians 10 or Romans 14, which enhances its applicability. While already here in chapter 8 Paul does address the food issue, it is on the general premise that Christian ethics are determined by love—not by authority, freedom, or rights. The sermon's goal is that the hearer love his neighbor, especially one of weak conscience. The problem is that we want to assert ourselves, even in helping others. The means to the goal is that we are loved by the Lord who made us, cares for us, and died for us.

Introduction: "Knowledge is power": atomic bombs, computers, Wall Street insider information. "If you cannot be an athlete in school, be a brain. Things will open up to you." We often think knowledge gives us freedom, privileges, even rights. But, for Christians, knowledge does not drive behavior; love does. The alternative is this:

PUFFED UP OR BUILT UP?

I. Knowlege puffs up.
   A. It exalts the individual.
      1. In Corinth some prided themselves on knowing that idols were nonentities (verses 2, 4). They thought this knowledge gave them privileges which were lacking for "weak" others who did not know so much or acted with more caution.
      2. In our day scholars are motivated by attaching undue import to their work and to enjoying prestige. But all of us try to "one-up" each other.
   B. It misguides the Christian.
      1. God's good gift, knowledge, can be misused and can then misguide. The "strong" wrongly thought they were helping the "weak" by getting them to eat food sacrificed to idols, even in pagan temples (verses 7, 9, 10).
      2. We feel in control when we teach or lead others. Even when we help them, we are often asserting ourselves, our authority, and our freedom.
   C. It destroys the weak.
      1. In Corinth the "weak" were harmed by being enticed to act against conscience. Some may have been tempted to revert to idol-worship.
      2. We can destroy others as we assert ourselves and our rights (personal, constitutional, etc.) more than we love others. This self-assertion is hellish.
II. Love builds up.

A. It starts with God.
   1. Knowledge too begins with God, but God enlivens knowledge with love, not vice-versa (verse 3, cf. Galatians 4:9).
   2. He is our Father, Creator, and goal (verse 6a). We are oriented to a person we can love, not a principle we can know.

B. It climaxed on the cross.
   1. Here *the* Strong One (verse 6b) bent to the weak, to us arrogant sinners.
   2. He died so we might not perish; He did it for us, not for the sake of asserting Himself; He arose so we might be brothers (verse 11).

C. It lives in the church.
   1. Christ Himself lives in the church—in our brother (verse 12).
   2. Love moves our deeds, even (especially) where "no rules" exist (adiaphora, verse 8). We cannot blueprint every situation, but we can love.

Conclusion: R. Harrisville has said, "It is necessary to know, not that one knows, but that one *is* known"—loved by God. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

Ken Schurb
Berne, Indiana

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 10, 1991

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

The text provides an opportunity for critical reflection upon our attitudes and practices in making disciples of all nations. Are we willing to make the sacrifices necessary to carry out this task faithfully? Verse 19 deserves a few comments. Paul says that he could simply preach the gospel and win some. But, if he is sensitive to the kind of audience he is addressing, he can win "the more" (*tous pleionas*). Paul is not saying that evangelism *methods* convert people. God is the efficient cause, and the means of grace are the instrumental cause of conversion. The approach we take, however, can hinder the furtherance of the kingdom of God. We never compromise or change doctrine; however, our practices and customs (adiaphora) may vary according to our audience.

The sermon outline intends not to blast the people for failing to make necessary sacrifices, for in many congregations the commitment to the trust which God has given us is very evident. Therefore, the tone might be somewhat complimentary and full of thanksgiving. Examples are used (compare 2 Corinthians 8:1-5) to urge the people to continue and increase in their sacrificial attitudes.

Introduction: We are the people of God. The Holy Spirit has called us through the word and the waters of holy baptism to receive all the blessings Christ has won for us by the shedding of His holy, precious blood. God, therefore, has entrusted into our care the sweet gospel message. And He asks us to adminster or discharge our trust by seeing to it that the gospel is proclaimed to every race, tribe, and nation. Discharging this trust is a great privilege and joy. How exciting it is to know that God has counted us worthy to participate in spreading His kingdom. But we must be aware of the demands:

DISCHARGING OUR TRUST

I. May require us to sacrifice money (verse 18).
   A. The Macedonian churches supported Paul during his missionary stop in Corinth (2 Corinthians 11:7-10). Paul did not use his right to be supported by his hearers in order that he might offer the gospel "free of charge."
   B. The Christian church has made great sacrifices over the years to fund mission work.
      1. Loehe supported missionaries to America.
      2. One can cite examples of local mother-daughter congregations.
      3. It is partly by virtue of the gifts of others that this congregation exists today.
   C. As we discharge our trust, God looks to us to use our resources so that we may offer the gospel to others free of charge (2 Corinthians 8:13-14; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).
      1. We support missionaries all over the world.
      2. We support mission congregations and special ministries in our local area.
      3. We purchase tracts and Bibles.
      4. We do these things out of thankfulness to God. He made us His children by sending us Jesus, who became poor that we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9).

II. May require us to sacrifice rights (verse 19).
   A. Christ has set us free (verse 19; Galatians 5:1-2).
   B. Out of love Paul gave up some of his freedom, his rights and privileges, that he might "win the more" (verse 19).

C. As we discharge our trust, we strive to become all things to all men. We do not compromise or change the truth of God's word, but we are sensitive to the audience.
   1. We learn the language of our audience.
   2. We meet people in their homes, at their places of work, et cetera.
   3. We try to make people feel welcome and comfortable among us.

Conclusion: God enables us to discharge faithfully and with willing hearts the trust which He has committed to us. He moves us to sacrifice our treasures and our rights that we may become all things to all men and offer the gospel free of charge. In this way we become His instruments in winning as many as possible.

Mark Boxman
Arkansas City, Kansas

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

February 10, 1991

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Introduction: There is the glory of winning when your team gets the winning basket right at the buzzer. There is the glory of being the best in your particular field, be it business, teaching, student, parent, or laborer. There is the glory of being right when everybody else said you were wrong. There are all kinds of glory, but the text this morning speaks in particular of two:

TWO KINDS OF GLORY

I. The glory of the righteousness of the law.
   A. The people of Israel had "veiled" minds and lived by the righteousness that the law brings, their own civil righteousness (2 Corinthians 3:14).
      1. They trusted in the outward acts of the ceremonial law and not in the one who was "to fulfill the law."
      2. Their righteousness was one in which they would "strain out the gnat, but swallow the camel" (Matthew 23:24).
      3. They were so ingrained in this kind of righteousness that, even when the Messiah came, they failed to recognize Him (2 Corinthians 3:15).
      4. They stubbornly clung to a righteousness that was "like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).

B. Not only the people of Israel have lived by the righteousness of the law, but likewise all who trust in their own good living.
   1. It is man's natural desire and drive to trust in his own righteousness (Ephesians 2:3).
   2. This kind of righteousness can only end in eternal death because it can never satisfy God's righteous decrees (Matthew 5:48; James 2:10).

Transition: The glory of the righteousness of the law always ends in the futility of death, but our text talks about another kind of righteousness.

II. The glory of the righteousness of grace (2 Corinthians 3:16, 18).
   A. In Christ the veil is torn away and true righteousness in Christ is revealed (2 Corinthians 3:16).
      1. He is true God and shines with the glory of God as shown in today's gospel.
      2. He has fulfilled all righteousness for the Jews, for us, and for all (Matthew 5:17).
      3. He has a perfect righteousness (Hebrews 4:15).
   B. Through faith in Christ, God declares us to be righteous for Christ's sake (Galatians 2:16; 3:11).
      1. He did what we could not do.
      2. He takes us from the futility of death and gives us life everlasting.
      3. Before God we have full and complete forgiveness.

Transition: Now that we have been declared righteous by grace through faith for Christ's sake we are a new creation and our very nature is one which desires to serve God (2 Corinthians 3:17).

   C. The righteousness of the glory of Christ is reflected as we are transformed by the Spirit's working of sanctification in our lives (2 Corinthians 3:18).
      1. In the new man we are constantly growing to be more like Christ (Ephesians 4:13).
         a. We grow through the word.
         b. We grow through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
         c. We grow in our life of sanctification, having thrown off the works of darkness (2 Corinthians 4:2).
      2. We set forth the truth of God's word plainly in our words and deeds (2 Corinthians 4:2).
         a. We now as new people want to witness to Christ's love as we share the message of what He has done for us.
         b. We do all to the glory of God.

Conclusion: There may be many things in which the world takes glory, but there is only one kind of glory that really counts and that is the glory of Jesus Christ.

John C. Kaiser
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Book Reviews

THE COMPASSIONATE MIND. By Donald L. Deffner. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1990. 192 pages. Paper, $14.95.

As the subtitle *Theological Dialog with the Educated* suggests, *The Compassionate Mind* provides both rationale and method for evangelization of the educated. Donald Deffner wants to construct in us "*a compassionate mind* to reach the *educated adult*, not a condescending mind, but a mind as Christ Himself had, who 'beholding Him, loved Him' (Mark 10:23)" (p. 15). In the course of the book we journey with Deffner, and so the first part of his tale is appropriately called "Odyssey." The first chapter gives us our moorings—"Who Are the Educated?" Deffner shows a compassionate mind by defining the educated as "those—with or without a university education—who grapple with the great questions of life: who are you? where are you going? what is the meaning and purpose in life?" Deffner is speaking here not of the Ph.D.'s who teach at universities or consult with multi-national corporations, but of the literate who read and think and reflect on major ideas and world issues. All of us know people who fit this definition. Who does not, at some point or other, ask himself these questions and suffer from loneliness, alienation, fear, anxiety, tension, stress, et cetera.

In the second chapter, "Books to Make Us Think," Deffner uncovers his major thrust—evangelism of the educated. What Christian pastor or layperson is not interested in the mission of the church? Deffner uses a series of books to lay the groundwork for developing a mission strategy for the educated adult, namely, Joel Nederhood's *The Church's Mission to the Educated American*; Anthony Padovano's *The Estranged God: Modern Man's Search for Belief*; John Powell's *A Reason to Live! A Reason to Die!*; selected writings from C.S. Lewis and J.B. Phillips; Chad Walsh's *Campus Gods on Trial*; William Diehl's *Christianity and Real Life*; J. Russell Hale's *The Unchurched: Who They Are and Why They Stay Away*; Edward Rauff's *Why People Join the Church*; and Richard Lischer's *Speaking of Jesus: Finding the Words for Witness*. By pointing us to books which may be new to us, or books we may have read already but forgotten, he provides the context in which one evangelizes the educated, using various approaches to reach them with the gospel. Deffner gleans from each book exactly what we want to know and, in a subtle but persuasive way, convinces us that the educated are a subgroup within our culture, that there is a legitimate mission to them, and that the concerns of the educated which the church must address are essentially the concerns of everyone in this world, whether educated or not. "Approaching the educated must be marked by boldness without dogmatism, authority without authoritarianism. Above all, the Christian is compassionate and humble rather than clever, while learning the art of loving listening" (pp. 44-45).

The odyssey continues with the chapter "Modern Literature and the Educated." Here Deffner discusses such diverse people as Dante and Milton, Camus and Kafka and Sartre, Hemingway and Faulkner, Jack Kerouac and Tennessee Williams, Ingmar Bergmann and Kurt Vonnegut and J.D. Salinger's *A Catcher in the Rye.* And this is only a partial list. Deffner should not dismiss so quickly, however, the Christ figure in *A Catcher in the Rye*, especially in the light of Salinger's other books and stories. The book's main character, Holden Caulfield, sees himself as saving children from falling off a cliff in a field of rye. This is exactly the kind of Christ figure that Salinger's generation demanded. This is *not* the humble, self-sacrificing Christ of the Gospels. Holden Caulfield is, as Deffner describes him, a "defiant young man rejecting everyone around him as frauds and phonies and attempting to be his own savior or a (strange) type of self-styled savior to others." Such a person was the inspiration for thousands of high school and college students who saw the Holden Caulfields of this world as the image of what they aspired to be.

The genius of Deffner's discussion of modern literature lies in its diagnosis of the neuroses of an entire generation by analyzing the literature of that generation. Preaching the law effectively requires identifying a culture's or generation's false gods that lead to its rejection of the gospel. Such preaching includes the identification of pet sins, but it is more poignant when one is able to show how those sins reflect an attitude that rejects the necessity of living a life of suffering in view of Christ's suffering. Deffner not only diagnoses the human condition, thereby enhancing the preaching of the law, but also reveals that this generation needs all the *compassion* Christians can show as it continues to search for meaning in life. The educated sometimes differ from those in our culture whose only goal is to avoid suffering. A look at their favorite books shows that they may exult in suffering and its consequences: *Look Back in Anger, The Stranger, The Sound and the Fury, The Dead, East of Eden, No Exit,* and *Nausea.* But when, like Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, they look over the edge into the darkness, all they can see is "the horror, the horror!" (A lacuna in Deffner is Joseph Conrad and the British novels of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.)

Deffner's tour of the literature provokes painful memories in those who have struggled with the ideas promoted by the literate of this century. But before turning to methodological questions in Part II, Deffner speaks to this generation of the hope that is within him by contributing to its literature three short pieces of his own. In *Descending to Transcend, The Pizzeria*, and *The Long, Dark Tunnel* Deffner offers us his own powerful tales of how some have overcome the darkness and, in looking over the edge, saw the horror of the cross and, beyond that, the dawn of a new world through the empty tomb.

This reviewer would not dare retell Deffner's stories and spoil them for others—they are worth the price of the book. In these pieces Deffner is both pastor and artist, priest and storyteller—*the compassionate mind*—sharing with us his vast experience as a thoughtful and humble proclaimer of Christ to the educated for more than forty years.

Part II of the book is entitled "Dialog," and it is completely different from Part I in tone and purpose. Not intended to involve the reader in the mystery of a literary journey, it is no less valuable. Here Deffner does the work of a professor, constructing a program of ministry to educated adults. The chapter titles speak for themselves: "Characteristics of the Educated Adult: Implications for the Church's Ministry," "Preaching to the Educated," "The Educated and the Bible," "The Case Study" (a fascinating and enormously effective pedagogical approach to the educated that Deffner utilizes in the classroom), "Building Trust with the Educated," and "The Educated Today." Deffner skillfully helps us think through what is necessary to set up a program for reaching the educated adult; every pastor should read carefully and inwardly digest this material. In my experience, it is the best theologically practical approach to evangelizing a specific target group within our culture. A few appendices are a bonus. One catalogues useful student projects which Deffner has tutored over the years; another conveys the results of a survey he conducted of campus pastors and their insights; and a third is a list of trends in campus ministry provided by Rev. Edward Schmidt, Campus Ministry Counselor of the LCMS.

A final word—everyone should read this book and the books Deffner evaluates in *The Compassionate Mind.* He analyzes the thinking of a world without Christ. We who feel a passion to reach this world with the gospel must know what this world is thinking. Deffner knows and he cares. And that is the best reason for buying and using this book. Concordia Publishing House should be commended for offering *The Compassionate Mind* to the church in its ongoing mission to the lost generations of this world.

Arthur A. Just, Jr.

LEARN NEW TESTAMENT GREEK. By John H. Dobson. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988. 306 pages.

For laymen contemplating a theological education or pastors reinforcing theirs, the prospect of (re)learning Greek can be a terrifying one. It is not surprising, then, that authors have searched for innovative methods whereby the fabled agony of such study might

be avoided. John Dobson's latest work is another of these efforts. In *Learn New Testament Greek* Dobson presents all the subject matter contained in most beginning grammars, but with an approach far different from the traditional paradigmatic method. According to Dobson, "Experience has shown that to use grammatical terms and lists at an early stage seriously hinders this [learning] process."

In Dobson's approach information is introduced in very small portions. Chapter 8 covers only the masculine and nominative forms of present active participles. As a result of such small units, paradigms are seldom found and are usually incomplete. To compensate for this absence the vocabulary is necessarily laborious, with each new inflection treated as a separate vocable. Rather than using grammatical terms such as "imperative" or "adjective," the text uses Greek forms for chapter headings. In keeping with simplicity Greek accents are not used except where they affect the meaning. Verbs are analyzed by augment, stem, and ending with no consideration of the connecting vowel between stem and ending. In general the author's concern for eliminating lists of rules, terms, and forms has resulted in a system where exceptions are portrayed as the rule.

Dobson's text does have several commendable features, however. English derivatives of the Greek vocabulary are given through chapter 13. *Aktionsart* is given due, albeit limited, attention. The three-part layout of exercises is very helpful with individual sentences, paraphrased blocks of Scripture, and actual readings from the Greek New Testament. Chapters 44, 46, and 48-51 offer much useful material, including lists dealing with word families and several interesting excurses on New Testament translation. Lastly the final twenty-five pages offer three refreshingly structured appendices: an "Appendix on Accents," an "Index to Grammar and Constructions," and a brief "Reference Grammar." Though valuable in some respects, the approach of Dobson's grammar causes more confusion than it removes. Regardless of his time constraints, the serious student of Scripture who is interested in reading Greek more for nuance than quantity would still be better served by one of the more widely recommended grammars.

Peter K. Lange
Concordia, Missouri

Indices to Volume 54 (1990)

AUTHOR INDEX

TITLE INDEX

Sixteenth-Century Lutheran-Calvinist Conflict on the *Protevangelium*. Ken Schurb.
1:25-47.

The Unity of Scripture. Robert D. Preus.
1:1-23.

SCRIPTURE INDEX TO THE HOMILETICAL STUDIES

fall-winter BOOKS

A MIND FOR WHAT MATTERS

Collected Essays

F. F. Bruce

In this book F. F. Bruce has collected eighteen of his lectures and essays on a variety of themes relating to the New Testament, early Judaism, and the early Church, including "Antichrist in the Early Church," "Women in the Church," and "The Humanity of Jesus Christ."

Paper, $19.95

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

D. A. Carson

"Written by a scholar who has read widely and has an excellent grasp of the literature on John . . . . All who read this commentary will read to their profit."

— *LEON MORRIS*

Cloth, $29.95

REASON FOR BEING

A Meditation on Ecclesiastes

Jacques Ellul

In this exposition of three intertwining themes of Ecclesiastes — vanity, wisdom, and God — Jacques Ellul interacts with recent scholarship and presents his own unique interpretation and contemporary application.

Paper, $18.95

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical

Volume I

James Leo Garrett, Jr.

"This book provides a well-informed overview in systematic theology . . . . It constitutes a veritable gold mine of well organized and clearly articulated materials in biblical and historical theology . . . . One of the most comprehensive, concise books of its type available, it should receive wide use in the classroom and in the study."

— *ROBERT H. CULPEPPER*

Cloth, $35.00

SUFFERING AND MINISTRY IN THE SPIRIT

Paul's Defense of His Ministry in II Corinthians 2:14-3:3

Scott J. Hafemann

"This is a stimulating and useful study . . . . a well-balanced and careful evaluation of a great mass of evidence . . . . Hafemann can be commended for throwing much needed light on an obscure and tangled subject . . . and for expressing sober and sensible opinions."

— JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

(review of the J.C.B. Mohr edition)

Paper, $21.95

INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

Fredrick Holmgren and G.A.F. Knight, editors

I KINGS

Nations Under God

Gene Rice

"This is a splendid commentary on 1 Kings. Dr. Rice is sensitive to the best of critical scholarship, which he uses with commendable judiciousness. His work is insightful and lucidly written . . . . It is highly recommended for scholar, seminarian, pastor, preacher, and every serious student of the Bible."

— *MURRAY LEE NEWMAN, JR.*

Paper, $10.95

WALKING TOGETHER

Roman Catholics and Ecumenism

Twenty-Five Years after Vatican II

Edited by Thaddeus D. Horgan

This assessment of the Roman Catholic Church's ecumenical relations in the past twenty-five years since the Second Vatican Council includes contributions from observers inside and outside Catholicism, including Avery Dulles, William Lazareth, and James Crumley.

"An invaluable resource . . . ."

— *BROTHER JEFFREY GROS*

Paper, $12.95